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ETHICS AND THE FAMILY

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ETHICS AND THE FAMILY

BY

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"ETHICS AND ATONEMENT"

HODDER AND STOUGHTON
LONDON NEW YORK TORONTO

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PREFACE

In a former work the author examined some of the leading principles of ethics, and compared them with what seemed to him to be the real meaning of the Christian doctrine of the Atonement. As a result, that doctrine appeared to be no capricious monument of theological ingenuity, but the answer to certain fundamental requirements of ethics; while, at the same time, it shed a light of its own on regions of which ethics has generally taken but little account.

The family is as central in society as the Atonement is in Christian theology, and in the present volume an attempt is made to discover what ethical elements are implied by that universal institution. The first half of the book is at once historical and theoretical. The varying forms of the family, and the varying expressions and embodiments of ethical feeling, are traced back to their origins in the distant past; but the more closely the two lines of develop-

ment are examined, the clearer becomes their witness to a common source. Each, as it would seem, has arisen from the same deep instinct in the human race, which it is not too much to call spiritual; and each, however little the process has been recognised, has been controlled by this instinct continuously. All human notions of goodness are the offspring of the august parent which has given birth to the most familiar and intimate of the relationships between human beings. The outer forms and the inner spirit are inseparably akin.

In the succeeding chapters attention is turned to some of the leading problems of the present day, biological, economic, social, and religious. Their perplexities are seen to rise, in each case, from the fact that the problems themselves involve moral considerations. On the other hand, the importance of moral and personal character does not warrant us in thinking any the less about environment and the changing forms of social institutions. To oppose character to environment, the moral and the spiritual to the social and the political, is a radical error. It is the function of institutions to give free play to the spirit; and unless the spirit finds appropriate

institutions through which to manifest its activity, it will be corrupted or atrophied.

Thus the service of society and its various institutions is fundamentally spiritual ; and every attempt to strengthen the spiritual life either of an individual or of the community, must take account of social conditions and possibilities. In this union of the social and the spiritual, the family is typical of all organised and common human life.

It will readily be seen that the book does not claim to break new ground. The many-sided importance of the family has long been recognised. But the author believes that its relation to ethics, as set forth in the following pages, has not been fully appreciated hitherto, and that in the recognition of the true character of this relation lie the answers to many of the questions which are forcing themselves upon our attention at the present day.

The ethical spirit which has found expression in the family is the primary endowment of the human race. The race only became conscious of its possession, indeed, as it came of age ; but the spirit and its embodiment have acted and reacted on one another all through history, with results as vital to re-

ligion as to social life. The hope of the future lies in a constant strengthening of this spiritual impulse, and the progressive adaptation of institutions to its demands; nor, rightly understood, can there be any better expression than this for the service of Him of whom every family in heaven and earth is named.

W. F. LOFTHOUSE

HANDSWORTH, 1912

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CHAPTER I

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FAMILY

I. THERE was never a time when physical discoveries and the love of change and novelty have more powerfully affected mankind; there was never a time when the secrets of antiquity have been more patiently and resolutely investigated. The age which seems to believe that its one function is to give way to another and a better successor is the age which has found that it cannot afford to neglect the study of any of the generations of the past. The problems that perplex us to-day are no products of our modern life. They are as old as the history of the nations of mankind, and as complicated. One of the oldest of them is the long-drawn-out conflict between the rights of the State and the rights of the individual. To-day, this conflict is being fought with renewed energy. Men cannot meet to discuss the administration of their parish, the government of the empire, the organisation of industry, the claims of religion, the needs of the Church, the welfare of the poor, or even the training of their own children, without stumbling upon the problem that has vexed their forefathers for centuries.

But behind this aged question lurks another, more aged still. Until lately, indeed, its existence has been scarcely suspected by the majority of

people ; but its importance has not been any the less for being neglected. It is the question of the family. And to-day the place claimed by the family is coming to be recognised in all sociological and economic discussions. Biologists, anthropologists, students of ethics and of psychology are paying increasing attention to the part played by the family in the history of the race. Every pressing social problem is seen to be conditioned by the family, and to act and react on the family, whether it be a matter of the support of the aged, the feeding of the young, the establishment of a standard of wages, the regulation or prohibition of home labour, or the position and functions of women in the modern world. To some the family is an indispensable factor in any permanent solution of these problems ; to others, it is the one great obstacle in the way of a solution ; and there are signs that in the near future the world of social advance will be divided into the two hostile camps of those who cry " the family is in danger," and " the family must go."

At the hands of theoretical reformers, the family, as an institution, has not always fared well. Plato, the first to construct a thorough-going Utopia, saw no hope for his ideal state unless the citizens, having all things in common, should include in that community women and children alike. He did not indeed suggest that the mass of manufacturing and artisan classes should be debarred from the luxury and responsibility of families, but he urged that the ruling and military castes, being the guardians and repositories of absolute devotion to the State, could conscientiously have nothing which they might call their own. They could not,

indeed, like the clergy of the Roman Church, be condemned to celibacy. But they could be compelled to have all things in common. The soldiers or " guardians " were to be specially and laboriously trained—women equally with men—for their duties as watchdogs of the civic flock ; and the mating between the sexes—we can use no other term—was to be specially arranged so as to serve the purposes at once of a reward for valour and a means of breeding the finest children.

Other framers of ideal commonwealths have for the most part refrained from such determined attacks upon the family. Campanella, indeed, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, came very near to reproducing the scheme of Plato, alike with regard to property and the relation between the sexes ; but Sir Thomas More, for his Utopians, went no further than to provide common civic eating halls, where the men sat on the one side of the table and the women on the other, and where the perils of private and unskilled cooking were avoided ; and public nurseries, where both mothers and foster-mothers had every convenience for caring for their babies. Other constructors of Utopias have been more interested in the relations of individuals, economically and socially, to one another, and have left the family alone. The last hundred years, however, have seen many attempts to put Utopia to the test of practice. The schemes of Owen and Fourier, in spite of the eagerness and confidence of their authors, could never succeed in being properly put into practice at all. But, as regards the family, they went little further than More, providing for common meals and cookery ; although Fourier's ideas on freedom of intercourse

between the sexes came very near to what most people would call immorality. It must be remembered, however, that no modern state has seriously set itself to grapple with immorality, and that the ideas which Plato handed on to later communists, whatever their permanent value, were the very reverse of licentious.

The experiments which the old world failed to make were carried out, in a surprising variety of forms, across the Atlantic. Owen's movement produced nineteen communities in the United States. These survived, it must be confessed, for a few years only. Nearly thirty Fourieristic colonies were formed within five years; none of them lasted for more than seventeen years. The most interesting and promising attempt at philosophic communism was made at Brook Farm, nine miles from Boston, in 1842, by a group of about 115 Bostonian transcendentalists. Its foundations were associated family life and agriculture as the basis of industry, each member retaining some of his private resources to secure personal independence. All labour, bodily and mental, was rewarded at the same rate. But six years exhausted the energy of the experimenters. When Fourierism and a new set of colonists invaded the older transcendentalism, the community could not adapt itself to the change, and broke down.

In all these colonies, the position of the family was a matter of secondary importance; the prime object was in each case to overcome what was felt to be the evil of private property. None have attempted the consistent radicalism of Plato; all seem to have tacitly admitted that "property" in wives and children is not identical with property

in houses or cattle, in tools or in land. Still, even in the atmosphere of refined Bostonianism at Brook Farm, its members could not live together as a community without finding ties of family life weakened. In fact, the most cursory study of the brief lives of communities suggests that the family, when neglected, is the foe of communism rather than of individualism. When pilgrims, flying from the system of individualism and competition, have risked the familiar stabilities of the family organisation for the wide unities of communal life, they have been flung back again and again, by the break-up of the new community, into the old individualistic land of bondage once more.

II. The great majority of mankind have been perfectly content to accept society as they have found it. Institutions are rarely criticised; they are taken for granted and tolerated. Conservatism, indeed, has immense advantages over innovation in human life. Change is bound at the best of times to produce some amount of inconvenience; the first acquaintance with the scarcity of the desert will make the fainter hearted among the fugitives long for the garlic and flesh-pots of Egypt. However bad things may have become, the proverbial wisdom of the ages bids us prefer the frying pan to the fire.

These considerations may well serve as a warning to all who would meddle with the family, that smaller and self-contained community of father, mother, and children, eating, sleeping, prospering and suffering together. They do so at their peril. But there is a far more serious reason for caution. The family is not an invention. It is a growth. An invention can be changed or flung aside. A growth can at best be modified or developed. The family was

not made by man. In some shape or form, it is as old as man, or older. It is indeed the most fundamental of the institutions in organised human society — more fundamental even than private property itself. Nature cares nothing for property. A man may be born, reach maturity, enjoy many days, die and leave his children behind him, without a single dream of ownership. But as long as there are children, there will be mothers, and the influence of the mother, whenever she cares to exert it, will have first chance with the child. And as long as there are mothers, there will be fathers; and the relation of the mothers to the fathers will affect the whole structure of society.

Whether the family ties are close-knit or loose, the family forms the immediate "universe" of the majority of human beings. It is the source and medium, to the individual, of countless pleasures, pains, inconveniences, advantages, hopes, views, fears. It is the home of the most intimate and deep-rooted emotions. It will often decide a man's whole attitude to his life and his work, his country, and even to his morals and religion. "The family is the primer in the moral education of the race."[1] "Let me make a nation's songs," said Fletcher of Saltoun, "and I care not who makes their laws." He might have said even more justly, "Let me make the nation's family life, and let who will be their legislators." For law itself is but a crystallisation of custom, and custom is simply usage; and of all usages the most deep-rooted are the usages of family life.

III. The family is the great principle of stability in life. Most of us are like the peasant in Stevenson's

[1] Peabody, F. G., "The Approach to the Social Question," p. 94.

fable. "'It was so my fathers did in the ancient days,' quoth he to the Earl; 'and I have neither a better reason nor a worse.'" Custom is the universal standard of the race. Imitation, say the psychologists, is among the most elementary of our instincts; and, as objects for imitation, there are no rivals to parents. All nations among whom family ties have been strong have been conservative and long-lived. India offers us the paradox of Western learning and Western freethought helpless to diminish the power of customs, irrational and ludicrous, over the most enlightened Orientals. It is because, however bravely the spirit of European ideas may advance on alien soil, the zenana locks the door in its face. Social conditions have been as permanent as the shape of the peasant's plough or the pattern of his wife's mantle or bodice.

The histories of China, Babylon and Egypt show that the rise or fall of dynasties means nothing to the nation if the inner family coherence is untouched. "Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." The people on whom this promise was bestowed, though they have been long since torn from the land assigned to their fathers, have exhibited a tenacious fidelity to their family life, fierce as the desperate hold with which they have clung again and again to their rock-built fortress of Jerusalem. Their reward has been that they have survived shocks which would have shattered other and stronger nations; and they have preserved laws first received and obeyed when the fathers of the aliens among whom they dwell, and whose hatred and respect they enjoy, were ignorant and naked savages. The results of the

Jewish respect for family life, even in the poorest classes, can also be seen in the health of their own children. In 1910, for instance, among poor Jews in Manchester, the mortality of infants under one year of age was found to be 118 per thousand; among poor Gentiles, 300 per thousand; and comparisons made some six years ago between Jewish and Gentile children in schools in the poorer parts of Manchester and Leeds have shown that the Jewish children are uniformly taller, they weigh more, and their bones and teeth are superior.[1]

IV. The family is as important to the sociologist as to the politician. We have long been debating the relative influence of heredity and environment. Biologists are wont to divide heredity into phylogenetic and ontogenetic,—the inheritance of the stock or race, and the inheritance of the family. The former, handed on like an entailed estate from one generation to another, is but a bundle of possibilities, the soil from which character is to be formed. It decides whether I shall be light-skinned or dark, tall or short, brachycephalous or dolichocephalous, like my neighbours. All that gives me what separates me from my neighbours, all that makes me an individual, comes from my ontogenetic inheritance. An increasing school of biologists, following Weismann, are convinced that acquired characteristics are not transmitted. This is a question which must be left to biologists to decide, and which we shall have to consider in greater detail in a later chapter. But, at any rate, a great number of acquired characteristics are not transmitted—not even the universally acquired characteristics of speech or the power of walking.

[1] Hall, W., "Child-feeding and National Well-being," "Progress," April 1907.

The only characteristics for which transmission is ever claimed are just those characteristics, bodily and mental, which *might* be gathered from environment. And the champions of heredity must remember that on their own principles, if we have inherited from our parents, they have inherited from theirs, and so on; so that there is not an ancestor, however remote, and however saintly or sinful, who has not left his mark on the bodies and minds of his descendants.[1] Whether parents who have acquired either diseases or immunity from diseases, either virtues or vices, can transmit them to their children, is doubtful. It is not doubtful that children come into the world with possibilities which, later on, are either atrophied or wakened into vigorous life by their surroundings. That is to say, what is certain is the influence of the environment; and the closest and most effective environment is the family. The advance of physiology has given a terrible fulness of unsuspected meaning to Kingsley's well-known words about babies who were damned before they were born. The habits of the mother will bless or curse the child before it actually enters the world; and from the moment of its birth, every single characteristic of the family into whose home it enters will affect its present growth and future possibilities. The school, the workshop, the club, may attempt at best to storm the fortress of the habit and the character. The family holds the key of the position.

V. Even in religion, the family would appear to be the dominating factor. True, no one who be-

[1] See Waggett, P. W., "Religion and Science," p. 130, and compare Galton's Law of Ancestral Inheritance, as stated and illustrated in Thomson, J. A., "Heredity," pp. 324-5. For a fuller discussion of the question see pp. 203 ff.

lieves in religion will deny that "the spirit bloweth where it listeth"; but every religious body has emphasised the importance of family piety, and every local religious community looks for its chief strength to families, and expects to find its new recruits, in the main, from the children of its supporters. Nowhere is the abiding influence of parents more constantly confessed than in connexion with the religious experience and history of the individual; all who engage in the work of Sunday schools speak in entire conviction of the importance of the home. Where the child (for better or worse) does not appear to take after its parents, the reason is not that home influences in general are weak, but that in particular instances other influences are stronger.

The Jesuits are right in the stress they have always laid upon the training of children. Their rules have been abundantly justified by modern psychology. Although there are doubtless plenty of exceptions, the majority of us do not live by intellectual considerations or convictions alone. The grown man repeats the prayer that he learnt at his mother's knees; he goes to church, and takes his children there, because such was the rule in his own old home; or he gives rein to a hasty temper because when he was a child such was not held a sin. Conversion itself, spontaneous and even catastrophic as it may often seem, is far more frequent when the general opinion of the family regards it as the recognised door to the mature religious life than when its importance is neglected or ignored.[1]

[1] *Cf.* Hall, G. S., "Adolescence," vol. ii., ch. xiv.; Starbuck, E. D., "The Psychology of Religion," pp. 58, 399.

> "The child is father to the man;
> And I could wish my days to be
> Bound each to each in natural piety."

Is not the very word "piety" suggestive, first, of the reverent affection of the child for his parents, and then of the dutiful submission of the child to the laws learnt earliest and most effectively from a parent's lips?

What is true of religion is true of morals. The usefulness of moral education in the schools is a matter for educational specialists to discuss, but it is certain that so far the best efforts of education have failed to dislodge the influence of the family from its stronghold. The atmosphere of the school is uniform; the characteristics of children are infinitely diverse—as diverse as the homes from which they come, and to which they return. We are taught, not so much by what we hear as by what we see. Our habits are not formed (as schoolmasters reluctantly admit) by the acts which are forced upon us from outside, however wisely or sympathetically; they are formed by the acts (both of body and mind) which we instinctively copy from the models set before us at home.

We may not love the other members of our family; we may simply tolerate them; we may long to be free from them, and to live a life of our own. Their influence is none the less strong. We may learn indifference from them, or even hatred and brutality, as in Browning's story of Halbert and Hob. But whatever emotion is bred by family life, it will manifest a strength of its own, and it will influence all other emotions that later life may arouse, as surely as the soil influences every seed planted in it. Wherever we go, we carry with us the ideals

in which we were suckled, the probity or the carelessness, the self-control or the easy-going compliance with temptation. When an individual succeeds in breaking loose, and in defying these ideals, everyone feels it to be something strange and demanding special explanation. Robinson Crusoe on his desert island was simply carrying into action the laws of his old home in York.

The importance of these considerations, for good, and also for evil, cannot be exaggerated. Granted a high tone in the family life of the community, and you may be at your ease about individuals. They will need to be watched, helped, and even struggled for; but you will have the support of an ally who was working for them long before you began your task, and who carries on the work at times and in places where you are helpless. A healthy nation, morally and physically, is made, in the first instance, out of healthy families, not healthy individuals.

But what if the family is not healthy? What is to be done if, throughout large sections of the community, family influence is weakened or makes, positively, for evil? Weakened, indeed, it cannot be, unless the family itself is broken up. However neglectful or selfish the parents, however absent from the dwelling or tenement all the elements that go, in our minds, to make up a "home," yet, so long as parents and children live together, the lessons of the family life are being learnt; and they will not be learnt the less effectively because they are never consciously taught. A mother teaches her child as well by her scolding or carelessness as by her training and love. A father stamps his character on his son as well by sending him out, after he has

left school, to earn money by some "odd job," as by apprenticing him to his own trade or making him work under his own eye. But how different are the lessons learnt!

Nor is this all. The physical results of the bad and shiftless family are as plain as the moral and religious results. Let home circumstances, illness, drink, continued unemployment, rob the child of good food, fresh air, and time for rest and place for play, and the child will grow up stunted in body and mind, fit material to form the hooligan and the unemployable. And we may have to face consequences more dangerous still. Even if, by a merciful law of nature, the acquired evils of one age are not handed on to the next, and a race of degenerate parents does not beget children more degenerate still, yet Weismannism does not hold good of the stock of mental and spiritual ideas in human society. Though the parents may hand on to the children possibilities of a physical health which has long since passed out of their own bodies, they can never teach their children lessons which they themselves have never learnt or have forgotten. The germ-plasm may live on immortal from century to century; traditions and customs, on the other hand, will utterly perish if the men and women who received them fail to hand them down.

Along with these practical results go others of great theoretical importance. If the family is the great teacher of morals, good or bad, we must search, in the family, for the foundations of ethics. The days are gone by for *a priori* ethical constructions. We can no longer postulate, with Hobbes, a primitive state of society where every man was a law to himself and a mortal foe to his neighbours, or feel at

all sure about the existence of an original sense of sympathy and general kindliness with Hutcheson, or of the fundamental consciousness of a categorical imperative, with Kant. We even doubt the alluring homogeneities, with their resulting antitheses of egoism and altruism, in the primeval man, which Spencer has so solemnly and diagrammatically displayed. The writer on morals, in these days, must be a psychologist. He must also be a natural historian. It is not for him to say, " this was the ethical creed and nature of the original man, for from this and this alone can be deduced the ethical principles on which I believe." He must watch human morals at their work, both in the present and the past ; he must note their conditions, their limitations, their adventurous advances, their heart-breaking stagnations. And if he does this, he will find that the morals he is contemplating always occur in a definite environment. That environment is the family. We cannot understand the meaning of ethics until we have studied the history of the family. And we shall never understand the true value of the family until we have weighed its influence on the history of human conduct.

VI. What follows from these considerations ? Many are beginning to meet our previous statements as to the services of the family to human life with a flat denial. So far from being the greatest benefactress of humanity, the family, we are told, has been tried and found wanting. It is too costly and too uncertain an instrument for good to be maintained in these days. Its influence on ethics has been as imperfect as its bearing on social life has been dangerous. All the conditions of modern life make against the value of its teaching. Our present

social system means the wide-spread existence of families which cannot and will not teach any lessons but the worst. The slum and the court (sole playgrounds for many a town child), the ill-ventilated, ill-drained and over-crowded rooms, the weak, ignorant, and overburdened mother, the careless and often selfish father, the poverty which robs the child of the needful clothing and food, the absence of privacy which destroys the chance of healthy intercourse or play of affection, all these things mean that in such surroundings the family can never teach the child right, but must always be teaching it wrong. At the other end of the social scale, the children of the rich fare little better than the children of the poor. Pampered instead of starved, left to menials instead of to ignorant or careless parents, constantly living in the presence of false ideals, the children of Kensington and Mayfair are as wrongly educated as their little brothers and sisters in Rotherhithe and Whitechapel. Even the great middle classes are suffering, on the one side, from the contagion of the example of wealth; on the other, from the constant struggle against the stealthy approach of poverty. We must take the children from the dangerous control of their parents altogether, and hand them over to those who shall be qualified to train the men and women whom the race was meant to produce.

Such is the spirit of the modern attack upon the family. It is not quite the attack of Plato; it starts from the desire for efficiency rather than from the fear of individual property. Nor is it the attack of the foes of the marriage tie. One of the many follies with which Socialists as a class are often

hastily credited by their opponents is a desire to replace the sanctities of married life by the casual unions of temporary inclination or fancy. Mr J. R. Macdonald has stated that nowhere and at no time was the abolition or even the weakening of the family incorporated in the Socialist creed. Mr H. G. Wells doubts if "there is at present among English or American Socialists any representative figure at all counselling Free Love." [1] Such counsels have always found their advocates, and they have been obeyed in secret (as they are in every civilised community to-day) and by men of every political creed, or none, where they are very far from being advocated in the open. "Free love is open to any solvent person to-day." But if it were capable of being accepted by the general feeling of mankind, it would have been accepted long ago.

The family is being judged by its success or failure in the matter of children. To quote Mr Wells again, "Socialism states, definitely, what almost everybody recognises nowadays with more or less clearness, and that is the concern of the State for children." [2] If the family cannot do right by its children, the family must go. And there are many, by no means inclined to avow themselves Socialists, who would sorrowfully agree with this proposition. Whatever may be the remedies proposed by various individuals who assume the name of Socialists, the recognition of the evils incidental

[1] Macdonald, J. Ramsay, "Socialism," pp. 94-5. Wells, H. G., "Socialism and the Family," p. 48. That the author of the "Revolutionist's Handbook," in his views on Marriage and Property, must not be taken too seriously, Mr Bernard Shaw has himself taken pains to show us.

[2] Wells, *op. cit.*, pp. 56, 57. Unfortunately, some of Mr Wells' later writing suggests that this is not the only reason he has for criticising the institutions of the family and of marriage.

to the modern family has obviously nothing to do with Socialism as such.[1]

There is yet another count against the family as we know it to-day. It is the position which it forces upon woman. Those who urge this argument are not by any means necessarily the champions of any doctrine of sexual "go-as-you-please." Instead, they suggest a control of the reproductive functions which no State dreams of enforcing at the present time. They point out the essential injustice of the institution in which the wife is the property of her husband, the drudge for his wants, the slave of his lusts, the worn-out nurse of the children whom he may irresponsibly bring into the world, and whom he can without difficulty leave to her care when he is tired either of children or mother.

This is not to deny that there are thousands of marriages which are ideal, and hundreds of thousands which, if they were dissolved by some action of the State to-day, would be re-formed to-morrow. Nor is it to deny that in many cases the husband is tyrannised over by an evil or dissolute wife, instead of the wife by her husband. But it does assert that, as at present constituted, the family may often make, not only for inefficiency in the children, but for cruelty and injustice to the woman. What is there to choose between the life of the Hindu widow, treated as a menial by all the zenana, and the mother whose faint hands keep starvation alike from the children who are still at school and the father who has discovered

[1] For other opinions of representative Socialist leaders, both as attacking and defending prevailing ideas of the relations between the sexes, see Stoddart, J., "The New Socialism," pp. 102-112. The main opposition expressed is directed against the "patriarchal" conditions of modern family life.

that he can live on his wife's earnings? Which is worse, to be immured in a Turkish harem, or to be tied for life to a husband who can send his wife on the streets (such horrible cases are not unknown) to earn money for him to spend on his pleasures? To reply "there are separation orders and there is the Divorce Court," is either to suggest that the institution of the family is approaching bankruptcy, or to confess ignorance of the actual conditions under which many a wife is forced to live. For whether we incline to preserve the sanctity of the marriage tie by the practical prohibition of divorce, or to remove temptations to infidelity by allowing divorces for even trivial reasons, the fact remains that so long as a marriage lasts, the family, as we know it, may be the scene and cause of the most acute suffering and wickedness.

Some would go further in their protest against the acknowledged evils of our present society. In the new social order, Bebel announces, "woman is to possess, both socially and industrially, absolute independence. She is to be subjected to no semblance of ownership or control, but to stand over against man, free and equal."[1] However revolutionary the words may sound, and whatever suggestions they may entail as to sexual freedom, it is difficult to see, on grounds of abstract justice, why one sex must for ever be denied the independence we claim for the other; and it cannot be forgotten that, even if individuals have discovered a way of turning their shackles into sceptres, the slavery of one sex has been and to a large extent still is a very real thing.

Further, this injustice, like every other, brings

[1] Bebel, A., "Woman, in the Past, Present, and Future," p. 229.

with it swift punishment to the society in which it is allowed to exist. For the ill-used wife is the handicapped and often incapable mother. Among the lower animals the mother may have to bear all the duties of rearing the young alone; though even in the animal world, as far as both the higher mammals and the birds are concerned, the father takes his share of toil during the period of the complete dependence of the offspring.[1] In uncivilised societies it is not usual for the father, personally, to lift much of the burden from the mother's shoulders, though he sometimes takes to his bed, as if he were the invalid, and not she. But the mother is always looked after by her friends among the women; and sometimes, as in Fiji, if she is obliged to go to work before the child is weaned, another woman will take her place as nurse.[2] It is only in civilised countries, where we may consider family life to be highly developed, that the father is free to withhold the only support for which a woman can look, and that a woman may have to bear the burden of nursing her child, looking after her home, and supporting her husband at one and the same time. One or other of these duties must be ill done. In any case, the children must suffer. And when the children suffer, the nation suffers. At its best, married women's labour is condemned by doctors and experienced social workers alike;[3] at its worst, it is the sacrifice of both mother and child to the fetich of an institution which has de-

[1] See p. 180.

[2] Thomson, B., The "Fijians," p. 212. For illustrations of the curious practice of the "couvade," where the father acts as the invalid after the birth of a child, and further references, see Parsons, E. C., "The Family," pp. 95, 100, 101.

[3] Compare the Report of the Royal Commission on Physical Deterioration (1905), p. 47.

generated into a mockery. We compel the mother to work in the interests of the sacredness of family life; and when she gives up the struggle, we offer her the negation of all family life, the workhouse; and there she and her child, and perhaps her husband, must be supported by the State.

It is probable that we shall hear very much more of these arguments in the near future. Pleas for humanity and efficiency alike are listened to at present as never before; and the reverence for traditional institutions, apart from their usefulness or adaptability to modern needs, is steadily weakening. It is not by appealing to the sanctity of the home that these pleas can be met. It is too easy to point to homes where any such sanctity is ludicrously impossible. Nor can we succeed by pleading that the family is inseparably connected with morals and religion. Too often the family, in its present condition, shows a contemptuous indifference to both. Nor is it enough to point to the multitude of happy homes which still exist—perhaps in quite as large a proportion as in previous generations. To do so may make us pause in any plan for alteration, or modification of the family. It can never remove our uneasiness at the existence of homes of the opposite kind.

VII. The convenient word efficiency has occurred several times in the foregoing pages. But the thoughtful student of society will not be inclined to allow it to claim final authority. Is efficiency, he will ask, the only thing we have to think about? Are the laws of human society to be regulated simply by our desire for comfortable lives and healthy children, and conditioned simply by the limits of human or social plasticity and

adaptability? Are there not more majestic and deep-founded laws which claim our reverence? Must not the demands of morality, independent of convenience or happiness or even health, be attended to? If considerations of efficiency agree with these, well and good; if not, to argue about efficiency is merely to waste time. Is it not our business to be clear as to what these fundamental laws of morality really are, and then to force the laws of our social institutions into conformity with them? Can disobedience to these ever be atoned for by any temporary access of material advantages?

To those who hold that the only real wealth of a nation consists in the number of moral men and women among its citizens, the considerations urged hitherto will perhaps seem of distinctly secondary importance. They will agree, however, that conduct cannot be considered apart from the family; and that the most essential elements in all conduct are just those which depend on the conditions and bonds of family life for their due estimation. Take away the consciousness of human kinship and marriage and the demands which they make upon us all, and you render unintelligible the sublimest tragedies, alike of life and literature. What could we make of an Orestes or an Alcestis, of a Griselda or a Caponsacchi? Sophocles and Shakespeare, Virgil and Tennyson would be bankrupt, as bankrupt as Wycherley and Farquhar are to-day, or as dramas of the type of "Dear Old Charlie," or the plays of MM. Coolus and Lemaître will be to-morrow; and there would be an end to the consciousness of those duties through which alone the mass of common men and women find life anything but a dull suc-

cession of eating and drinking, playing and sleeping, with death to close all.

A more thorough-going procedure is therefore necessary. We have a very serious antinomy to reconcile. Accuser and defendant are at the point of flat contradiction. How can we arrive at a verdict ? One thing is clear. Like all institutions, the family must be judged, not by its condition at any particular moment, but by its history. What part has it played in the evolution of the human race ? What was its origin ? What functions has it performed ? Are the evils of which we have been complaining necessary or accidental ? Can the services which it has rendered be performed in any other way ? We cannot shatter the structure of the world to bits, and " then remould it nearer to the heart's desire." We cannot with a light heart set out to destroy an institution which is as old as the race itself. It would be wiser to bear the ills we have. All attempts at cure must be preceded by diagnosis. It is foolish to say " this does harm ; let us get rid of it." It may also be doing a vast amount of good. But it is equally foolish to say " this is from of old ; we cannot touch it." There are many ways of touching a thing besides attempting to uproot it. Let us first understand the real terms of this venerable legacy from the infancy of our human history ; and we may then bend it more completely to our need.

The course of our inquiry, then, will lead us to consider the history and origin of the family as an institution ; we shall next try to discover the beliefs from which it has sprung ; we shall look to see whether any distinction is to be made between the general type or idea of the family and the actual

forms under which family life has appeared at different points of history. We shall consider how far the family itself and the spirit which has given it birth are essential to the well-being of society at the present day; and we shall then be in a position, finally, to forecast the place and functions for which it must prepare in the future.

But in doing this we shall be doing something more. We shall be attacking a formidable problem of morals. To consider the origin of any human institution is to consider the laws of human conduct. The study of sociology can never be separated from the study of ethics. The closer they are joined together, the more intelligible will each of them become. Hence, our task is not simply to trace an institution to its source. It is also to inquire whether there are any great principles and uniformities of conduct which shall enable us to see why conduct has always clothed itself in a certain garb and equipped itself with a particular set of tools.

CHAPTER II

THE FAMILY IN HISTORY

I. Most of us dwell in a universe which is sharply bounded by our own experience. "Family" means for us, therefore, the simple household of husband, wife, and children, perhaps with one or more servants. It lives a more or less settled and independent life in the midst of neighbours, and keeps up friendly relationships, often intimate, and sometimes economic, with the grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins of the children, though these relationships tend to grow less and less close with the lapse of time. Within this general scheme, however, there is a considerable divergence; some families are known by their friends to be a good deal more "united" than others. The amount of the family income usually goes a long way to determine how soon the various children will become self-supporting. Mere geographical distribution may almost break off intercourse between those who are closely akin to each other. Outside the ranks of cousins (or sometimes, of brothers and sisters only) marriage is generally a matter of individual or parental choice or inclination. Some such image as this rises to the mind when we speak of preserving the family; we think of the control of the father, modified to a greater or less degree as the children begin to earn money for themselves; the responsibility of the mother for kitchen and clothes;

the ready give and take of family life ; the gradual emancipation of the younger members ; and the enlarged gatherings and deepened sympathies at weddings and funerals.

The point at which this emancipation will commence will vary in different sections of the " middle " and " lower " classes and with differing financial circumstances. The artisan, and, still more, the casual labourer, whose children leave school for work at the earliest possible age, will lose or repudiate the control of their parents almost immediately. If the lad's or girl's earnings are recognised as necessary to the family exchequer, he, or she, can often deal effectively with parental rebukes. Holidays will be taken separately ; and even when the members of the family attend the same church or chapel, they will sit in different places. As the family rises in the social scale, the mother will be found to hand over to the father her responsibility for finding employment for the children and house-room for everyone. Higher still, the children will keep together until the increasingly late age when they think of marriage.

But even this somewhat vague description is not general enough. At the higher end of society certain great families, titled or untitled, pride themselves on embracing a much larger number, both of individuals and of generations, in their family regard ; and on a much more determined maintenance of traditions, customs, possessions, and manner of life.[1] At the lower end, every city in Europe

[1] The various pictures of family pride given in a novel like Trollope's " Doctor Thorne " well illustrate the habit of living, as Burke expressed it, " in the presence of canonised ancestors," and the subtle breakdown of the habit under the pressure of financial needs. Trollope's representation, though written before the period of American matrimonial alliances, is

swarms with men and women who have neither family nor home, who are wanderers upon the face of the earth like Cain, and far more nomadic and isolated than any savage, Bedouin or bushman. And in the penumbra and purlieus of our civilisation there exists an organised denial and defiance of family life and purity which, to some, is the price of the permanence of family life, and, to others, its shame.

Turn, however, to other ages and countries, and the definition at once begins to totter. Here we may find a family life where three or even four entire generations will be living together on the same wide farm, in Eastern Europe, and where the isolation from all who are not kinsmen is practically complete. There, a community of husband, wife, children, and retainers, cooped up within the thick and narrow walls of the mediæval castle, to whom the kinsman is no better than a stranger. Yonder, in the deserts of Arabia, the group of brothers, with their wives and children, follow the guidance of sheikh—father or elder brother—from place to place, and each man knows that apart from that group there is for him neither livelihood nor safety. Or we may find, in many a wild uncivilised place, that family and tribe melt into one another ; that almost everyone is known to be of some kin to everyone else, and that each member of the tribe or clan is born to certain duties, not only to parents, but to relations for whom our richer languages have no distinctive name at all.

II. What, then, shall we say to these types of the family, or to many others which could easily be

equally true of to-day ; though it is not always easy to say where pride of family passes over into personal vanity.

added? Are they equally worth preserving with that which we happen to know best? At all events they have all played in their time a great part in the history of the world. Their diversity renders the definition of the term "family" all the harder. Yet it must be attempted. Even if we are interested only in the particular species existent in our part of the world at this precise period of history, we must begin by being clear about the genus as a whole.

Is the family, then, a matter of birth? If so, how many generations must it be considered to include? It cannot be a matter of birth alone; at its widest and narrowest alike, it includes a certain amount of common social life; and, in the vast majority of instances, positive diversity of birth is essential at the very foundation of the family, namely, between husband and wife. The beautiful comradeship described in Wordsworth's "We are Seven" can happily be found in every part of Western Europe; but no ties looser than those which unite brothers and sisters in one home could commonly survive the shocks which seemed to Wordsworth's simple child things of nought. Again, all family life implies some economic community. The younger son who goes into a far country may either send or receive remittances, or at any rate hope to return and live with his parents once more; but when he has settled down there, and has wife and children of his own, a fresh family has come into existence. On the other hand, when one whom we should consider a distant relation takes and gives his share with the rest, or when the "stranger within the gates," as is not uncommonly the case, is treated as one of the kin, and undertakes

the appropriate liabilities, he is felt to have joined the family.

In the older forms of the great Aryan section of the human race, the family is held to embrace three generations on either side of its oldest living member. The old man sitting by the hearth may see around him children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren ; and he himself may dimly remember the days when, as a child, he played around his own great-grandfather's knees. In the ancient laws both of India and Wales, the family proper extended over seven generations. No two persons, that is to say, who had a common ancestor still remembered by a living kinsman could marry. Outside these limits, and within the general limits of the tribe, they were free.

Is every servant or retainer, then, who is supported out of the common stock like child or aged grandparent, to be considered a member of the family ? No categorical answer is possible. Everything depends on the way in which the retainer is regarded. While the family may be wider than the ties of birth, there are certain mutual obligations recognised between the members of a family and non-existent outside its limits. The duties of husbands to wives, wives to husbands, are very different things in different countries ; but they are always there ; and they exist, and are performed, simply because husband and wife are what they are. The same thing may be said of parents and children, brothers, and cousins, and more distant relatives. Masters have certain duties to servants, and servants to masters ; but these have another basis ; and this is not personal but monetary. The family bond and the cash nexus exclude one

another. In some instances the independence which demands payment for services rendered falls into the background, and the servant, like another Caleb Balderstone, becomes a humble and devoted friend. Even then, he would hardly be thought of as a member of the family; the other tie, of birth, is wanting, even though he may be treated exactly as a "poor relation."

There is no cash nexus between owner and slave. That is why the slave may either be a mere chattel, worse off than an ox or an ass, or, for practical purposes, almost a member of the family, as sometimes in ancient Greece and Rome, and generally among the Hebrews. But if the slave is to enter the family, some "legal fiction" will have to be carried out, whereby, as in the case of the stranger adopted into the blood brotherhood of the family or tribe, the blood of his new kin may be supposed to flow through his veins. It makes no difference to the true family, however, whether these personal relations are defined by law or not. Law can at best set down in black and white certain arrangements that are generally accepted, and try to prevent their infraction by people who repudiate them. It is a preservative—though an imperfect one—of those spiritual bonds whose origins and whose foes alike lie outside its jurisdiction.

But once more; for real family unity there must be unity of religion. To us, with our belief that religion is a thing of individual choice, this must always sound strange. The opinion is indeed widely held that children ought to be brought up in what is considered to be the religious faith of their parents; but no one doubts that the child of Catholic parents ought to be free to enter a Protestant

communion, or that a youth brought up in a Nonconformist society should be allowed, if he so desires, to become a Swedenborgian or a member of the Anglican Church. But to the majority of mankind, in this age and in every other, such an opinion would be held to be equally wicked and preposterous. Every missionary has found this, to his cost; and even in England there are few families where any real unity could survive the appearance of a deep religious diversity. Imagine an Anglican household where the daughter was a convinced theosophist and one of the sons a convert to Mohammedanism. If, in many families, religious differences count for little, it is because what is called religion—at least, for most members of the family—is hardly worthy of the name. Otherwise, such differences would at once be felt as a serious obstacle to full family life.

We can thus arrive at a general definition of the family. It is a group, founded on ties of birth and marriage, recognising mutual personal obligation, maintaining a certain social, economic, and religious life in common, and capable, under different circumstances, of large expansion or definite contraction. Such an institution, as will probably be admitted by everyone, is no invention. Who ever could have been ingenious enough to have lit upon a device at once so simple and so complex, so adaptable and yet so rigid? Its adaptability, indeed, which might have seemed to a constructive statesman to have constituted its peril, has been its salvation. As Grosse says, "there is no function of culture which has not exercised a definite influence on the organisation and functions of the family." There is not a difference of temperament, not a

change of circumstance, that has not had its effect on the family. And yet there is hardly one of all the countless varieties of human society where the family has not appeared as the central institution within the community.

III. We must now proceed to trace some of these generalisations in history. If they can be substantiated, we are obviously at a considerable advantage for discussing the services which we wish rendered by the family of the future; if they cannot, the sooner we recognise this fact the better.

Let us commence, then, with the modern family. It consists, in general, of the smallest possible group of relations; indeed, the number of little families has probably never been greater, proportionately to the population, than to-day. Grandparents are comparatively seldom found living with their own children: they will either be ending their days in homes of their own, or, if poverty prevents this, they must often be sought in workhouses or charitable institutions. A widow, again, will seldom turn to her husband's family, or her own; and even orphans will be sent to "Homes" of some kind, or taken charge of by friends, especially among the poorer classes, almost as often as by relations. Many observers speak in strong and welcome terms of the real friendliness and sense of kinship pervading the family life of the poor, especially in seasons of hardship or trouble;[1] but it is equally true that this attitude may be altogether forgotten. Let anyone read the report of the Commissioners on the Poor Law issued in 1834,

[1] *e.g.* Loane, M., "The Queen's Poor," ch. iii.; Paterson, A., "Across the Bridges," ch. vii.

and he will see how under the pressure of a mistaken and erratic administration, independence and family feeling were both squeezed out of the minds of a very large number of English people; aged parents and young boys and girls were eagerly handed over to the care of the Guardians; and the discovery was made (and acted on) that it was actually more profitable to have illegitimate than legitimate children. With all its faults, the Poor Law has never repeated these mistakes; and if, at present, family ties seem to be weakening, it is because the mobility of modern life is all against them. For the rich, increasing possibilities of travel break up the stable life of the country seat; for the middle class, the growth of large businesses, with numerous country branches, means that many persons must sit very light to their homes and be prepared to move at what would once have been impossibly short notice; and for the poor, if work fails in one town, the father will travel to another, hoping to send, later on, for his family; or the parents migrate and the children remain behind in their old situations. The constant demand for unskilled labour in boys and girls is always at work to undermine family cohesion; and such cohesion must be strong indeed to resist the strain of the reversal of normal functions, when, as not seldom happens, the middle-aged father is actually kept by wife or even by children.

When we cast our eyes over the social life of Europe, since the commencement of the Christian era, we perceive how small a share in the alterations of the life of the people is attributable to all the wars, the risings and fallings of kingdoms and empires. Alterations in abundance there have been.

But the real causes of these alterations are primarily neither military nor political but economic. We can see how opportunities for trade and the neighbourhood of trade routes have directed the survival or growth of towns; but the foundation of social life is agriculture. And wherever there is agriculture, there are more or less enduring traces of the clan or large and compact family. The clan system is like Antæus; it is strong when it touches the soil. Many of our place names, such as Gillingham, Woldingham and even Birmingham (farmstead or home of the Gillings, Woldings, or Beormings), show how the farming was carried on by families; and the laws of settlement which bound the labourer, later on, to the parish in which he was born, tended to perpetuate this ancient union.

Further, the intense devotion of the French peasant to his ancestral holding is familiar to everyone; it would be impossible but for the conviction that land is a matter for the family, and must neither be alienated nor handed down in such a manner as to keep any member of the family out of his share. Divided and sub-divided, the little plots can only provide for small and separate families. In France, as in Germany, Spain, Austria and Italy, the rights of a parent to leave his property as he pleases are very seriously limited by law. Each of the children can claim a certain amount of the paternal estate. As in the case of the entailed estate in England, the father is the trustee for the family, rather than the owner. In the systems of tenure known as Borough English (found in many parts of the south of England) and Gavelkind (found throughout a large part of Kent), land

descends to the youngest son, or to all the sons respectively.

With regard to Eastern Europe, Le Play has shown how the whole agricultural industry rests on what must be called the large, or (to borrow his own term) the "stem family." This term applies to any community where two or more married couples, the husbands being kinsmen, live and work together, with their children. Such a family may contain twenty or more persons, and embrace three or even four generations. In the wide steppes of Russia, or on the barren lands inhabited by the Southern Slavs, intensive culture such as the French or Italian peasant loves is out of the question; hence the family approximates to the type of the old Russian "mir," the village community of kinsmen who till the whole of the land in common, under the guidance of the headman or patriarch. The law that broke up the "mir" and made possible independent economic action on the Russian plains, did more than anything else to break up the old clan organisation of society.

The old English manor, with its "three-field" system, suggests a similar ideal of communal family agriculture; and without deciding whether, in the original Teutonic "mark," the land actually belonged to all or only to one, it was certainly a complete clan community, a large family economically self-contained and independent.[1] In fact, the family ideal was stronger economically than socially or morally. Christianity found the agricultural community already in existence, but it had to struggle for centuries to abolish first polygamy and then concubinage; and the respect it gained for chastity,

[1] See Vinogradoff, P., "English Society in the Eleventh Century."

by its increasing insistence on sacerdotal celibacy, was dearly paid for in the abuses with which that perilous institution familiarised the mass of the people. Thus, the family exists in every age, but its forms are found to correspond very closely with the prevailing forms of tillage.

IV. In classical times the family was clothed with far greater authority. The Christian Church, whose activity has, throughout its history, travelled so far outside what we are accustomed to consider the sphere of religion, partly preserved the Roman law for the nations of modern Europe, and in part broke and destroyed its power. It found the old Roman family system growing steadily weaker, and it trampled the law of that system underfoot. The centre of the system was the "patria potestas," the authority of the father. A free man, on the death of his father, had absolute power, even of life and death, over his own sons and grandsons and their wives, as over his slaves. All their property was legally his; they could not marry without his consent, and he could, as late as the days of Marcus Aurelius, divorce his sons against their will. To make his son a free man during his own lifetime, it was necessary to sell him to a third party, who would then emancipate him like a slave. The time-honoured legal distinction between personal and real property had its origin in the fact that the state further recognised the family organisation by distinguishing between things which could and could not be allowed to pass out of the family.[1]

[1] Of the three forms of marriage known to Roman law only the loosest was at all common in any but the earliest times. In this way the wife stood outside the "potestas" or "manus" of her husband, though the unmarried woman never gained the same freedom. It is curious that among the Malays two forms of marriage are known, one in which the husband

Nor was this all. Outside the family stood the "gens" or clan. Every Roman citizen belonged to a recognised "gens." When a slave was freed or a foreigner became a Roman citizen, he would have to enter some "gens," whose name he would then bear. Paul was possibly a Julius or a Cornelius. At the older of the two great Roman assemblies, the "comitia centuriata," the whole body of citizens met and voted by these "gentes." These clans—larger families, as they really were—gradually lost their political importance, retaining, however, their special religious duties undiminished; at these all the kinsmen, but no others, were expected to be present. In the same way each head of a household, possessed of the "patria potestas," was priest in his own house.

In Greece, again, the family rather than the individual was the unit. Most people are familiar with the place which the family occupied in the Greek imagination, from the gorgeous but terrible pictures of Greek tragedy with their constantly repeated motive of the ancestral curse or taint,

> "Presenting Thebes' or Pelops' line,
> Or the tale of Troy divine."

That motive continued to be powerful in historical times, as is shown very clearly by the fortunes of the house of the Alcmæonidæ. Even in republican Athens, hereditary duties were assigned to certain families. As in Rome, the family was actually the basis of citizenship. One of the oldest political divisions at Athens was that into "phratriæ" or "brotherhoods," originally founded on nothing

is purchased by the wife's family, the other in which the wife is purchased by the husband or his friends (Waitz, vol. i. pp. 144 ff., cited in Hobhouse "Morals in Evolution" vol. i. p. 169).

but birth. In Greek private law the family was of equal importance. The Athenian husband had complete power over his wife, and over his sons until their marriage. The testamentary right of the individual was strictly limited; property, in many states, could not pass out of the family; the will was, indeed, to the Greek mind, a device for maintaining the continuity of the family with its religious duties and obligations.[1] In Bœotia, the number of estates in the country was rigidly fixed, a provision which was equivalent to a comprehensive law of entail; in Corinth, there was a legal provision to the effect that the actual number of families was always to remain the same.[2] The personal, as distinct from the legal, relations of man and wife, however, were very different in Greece and Rome. Until the later years of the Republic, the Roman matron is the type of dignity, courage, and wisdom. The same thing is true of the antique Spartan mothers, who bade their sons return from the wars with their shields or on them. In the Homeric age, nothing can be more dignified than the social position of some of the women, and the same thing appears to be hinted at in the recently discovered remains of the earlier Cretan civilisation. But in Athens, where the woman's legal position was very similar, she lived in an almost Oriental seclusion in the women's apartments of the house, her sole function being to preside over her husband's home, and to produce true-born children for him—

[1] Compare Ramsay, W. M., "Historical Comm. on Galatians," pp. 350 ff. In Rome, the feeling for the family took another direction, and the father in virtue of his potestas came to have full power to will his property as he liked.

[2] The membership in the Attic demes was hereditary, like membership in the parishes of mediæval Siena: see Zimmern, A. E., "The Greek Commonwealth."

a sacrifice to the idea of the never-dying family—while he could go, for social intercourse and amusement, anywhere he pleased.

V. No one will need to be reminded of the place held by the family in the life of the Israelites. The whole national organisation rested on the tribes, and, through the tribes, on the families. This is equally marked in early and in late times, and the family system is equally necessary to law and to religion. The passover is a family celebration carried out by the head of the household. When a guilty person is to be discovered by the oracle, a selection is first made of families, and the family of the criminal is condemned with him. The right of blood-revenge belongs to the next-of-kin. When a man has left no children, his brother is responsible for the birth of children from his widow. Obstinate disobedience to parents is punished with death. For a family to be extinguished in Israel (as in Greece) is looked upon universally as the greatest misfortune. The family character of estates is as much emphasised in Israel as in Greece and Rome. Not even for Ahab will Naboth consent to alienate his father's patrimony. If there is no son at all to inherit an estate, it must be given to a slave ; only in later times are daughters considered capable of becoming heirs.

The position of woman in Israel is of special interest. As in ancient Europe, she is absolutely in the power of her husband or father. A wife is acquired by purchase or service.[1] The common name of husband, "baal," means simply master. The early laws collected in Exodus xxi.-xxiv.,

[1] See Genesis xix. 8, xxxi. 14 ; but notice also vv. 30, 31, and compare Engert, T., "Ehe und Familienrecht der Hebräer," pp. 58 ff.

regard as her a chattel; sexual offences against her person are looked upon and punished simply as crimes against property—her father's or husband's property in her. At her husband's death, she passes into the power of her brother or his sons. She must be prepared to tolerate the presence of a second wife or a slave concubine. Polygamy is not prohibited,[1] and divorce is allowed to the husband for causes which are not very carefully defined. The wife could not, as under the laws of Hammurabi, divorce her husband.[2] In all this, the laws of Israel are strikingly similar to those of early Arabia.

Still, the actual position of women, as in Rome, is far higher than such laws would lead us to expect. She is mistress as well as slave, person as well as thing. She knows nothing of the seclusion of the Turkish harem or the Hindu zenana. Regarded by the law—a very conservative force in Palestine as elsewhere—as so much property, she is honoured by her husband and her neighbours as a mother in Israel. Hebrew history abounds in fascinating pictures of energetic, capable, and high-minded women; Bertholet has pointed out the significance of the special mention of the names of the kings' mothers in the chronicles of the royal houses of Israel and Judah. A race which could produce a Deborah and an Abigail, which could fashion the splendid eulogy of the capable housewife in Prov. xxxi., and repeat with delight the stories of a Ruth, an Esther, and a Judith, could never despise or degrade its women. Few things in literature are more beautiful than Boaz' exquisite courtesy to the friendless widow from Moab. But the glory of

[1] See, for example, Deut. xxi. 15.

[2] See, however, for evidence of later feeling, Mal. ii. 14 f.

the woman was the product of the honour of the family. The family was the real unit of worship. The individual was able to approach Jehovah because he was a member of one of the families and tribes of Jehovah's people Israel. The Hebrew family organisation is thus strikingly like that of other peoples, both Semitic and Aryan; but it rose above them all, even as Hebrew family life grew steadily more gracious and beautiful, because Hebrew ideas were increasingly saturated with the thought of Jehovah's law and grace.

In ancient Babylon, the proprietary right of the father over his children and wives is to be observed with equal clearness, though it is more limited. Disobedience to parents, in the law of Hammurabi—the great Babylonian code drawn up some two thousand years before the beginning of our era—is punished with mutilation instead of death, and the father is not allowed to disinherit a son save for at least two serious offences. In general, the Babylonian laws dealing with family life exhibit the same Semitic characteristics as appear in the Hebrew law and in Arabian customs, but modified, and, as we should say, civilised by the milder conditions of town life.[1] The position of the woman as against the sons is more carefully guarded; the woman is further on in the advance to an economic personality.[2] At the same time, both tribal and

[1] It was customary at marriage to give a certain sum of money to the bride's father, as well as to the bride herself; the commercial considerations understood in marriage-arrangements are also illustrated in sections 137-143 of Hammurabi's Code. A translation is given in Johns, C. H. H., "The Oldest Code of Laws in the World."

[2] In the later Babylonian empire, and under the Persians, we find this progress continued; compare especially Johns, C. H. H., "Babylonian Laws and Contracts and Letters," p. 119, and the Aramaic documents recently discovered at Assouan.

clan system have disappeared, and we find implied everywhere the small family, independent but coherent. Genealogies are very carefully kept, as with the Jews, and a system of hereditary trades and handicrafts is common, though apparently not universal. The accounts of the great banking house of "Murasu & Sons" remind us strongly of our own great mercantile families and their traditions.

VI. The facts are very different in India. Here, as in dealing with other cases, we must beware of easy language about the "unchanging East." The history of the last two generations is enough to show how inapplicable are such words to the whole of farther Asia. Throughout the greater part of the social history of India, indeed, the changes have been so gradual as to be hardly noticeable save to the careful student. As in Europe, conquering legions have tramped backwards and forwards over her plains and across her mountain ranges; but her peasants have ploughed their fields, administered their village business, worshipped their gods, and perpetuated their families as continuously as her sages have remained plunged in thought. Yet every change of dynasty, every conquering race, has left marks on the social and economic life of the people, and is reflected in the actual status and capacities of the family.

The kernel of Hindu society is that joint family community which we have already met with among the Slavs and Teutons, and, in a modified form, among the Mediterranean peoples. But in India there is no real "patria potestas." The family is a community which embraces the descendants of a common ancestor, with the wives and daughters

of the male members thereof. Within this family the interdependence of its members, social, economic, and religious, is complete. In fact, the basis of its existence is religion, and all its functions, as is universal in India, have a religious character. It is not necessary, indeed, that all the members should reside under a common roof; but every family has a common house, where are kept the family gods, where the family worship is carried out morning and evening, and where all the members have a recognised place—at once a residential club and a chapel. Every one contributes what he can—or chooses—to the common stock. The accounts of the family exchequer are kept by a manager, who is usually the oldest male; but no note is preserved of the amount of the individual contributions; nor is any attempt made to give to each member as much as he has brought in, and no more. Everything is enjoyable in common. The ideal is obviously "from each according to his powers; to each according to his needs."

The fact that this system has remained for so many centuries in all parts of India shows that its ideal cannot be denounced as impracticable. Individuals can, of course, possess certain articles as their own private property; but the alienation of land requires the assent of all the members of the family. The family indeed is a great corporation, or, as some legal systems represent it, a body of joint owners or partners. The head of it is not the owner of the property, but the manager. The women alone are placed under definite personal authority. They must be said to belong to the family rather than to be members of it. The formula of Manu is well-known: "an unmarried

woman is in the power of her father; a wife, of her husband; a widow, of her son." This does not prevent the woman, however, from wielding great influence at times, and even from ruling the household with a power none the less vigorous because it cannot be legally enforced, and must be exercised from a position of almost complete seclusion within the home.[1]

Hindu law prescribes that, after the death of father and mother, the assembled brothers may divide the estate among themselves in equal shares; or else the eldest son alone may take charge of the estate, the younger brothers living under him as under their fathers. While the father lives, they have no power over their property; he is the sole manager. The joint family will also administer justice between its members; and its existence will naturally obviate any necessity for a Poor Law.

Such is the Hindu ideal. It has had to live in the presence of aboriginal populations who "know not the law," but show no signs of disappearing; it has seen the rise of organised Mohammedan society in its midst, with its own definite body of laws; it has watched the gradual but sure modification of religious ideas from Vedic times onwards—the hardening of caste, the lowering of the position of woman, the spread of Hinduism to non-Aryan races; it has endured the ubiquitous presence and multiform activities of the agents of Western thought and government. Yet competent observers tell us that to-day its strength is undiminished.

[1] The marriage of widows is not prohibited in the Code of Manu, nor is it universal to-day in India outside the Brahman caste. In Bhopal the ruler is almost always a woman. In the non-Brahmanical state of Coorg marriages are solemnised by women.

It hardly takes the trouble to adapt itself to new conditions; it simply lives on.[1]

It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that this type of joint-family is universal in India. Even where it is strong and widespread, it often exhibits variations and departures from what has been described as the normal; and it is rarely found with any completeness south of the Vindhyas. In the South the social system points back to a race older than the Aryan invaders, whose ideal was the division of the tribe into larger and smaller families. In the latter the father was supreme. The tribal territory is parcelled out among the larger and smaller groups, much as Palestine was parcelled out among the Hebrew tribes and families. In many cases periodical redistributions are made. The whole tribe will often combine for purposes of irrigation or other operations, such as the burning of surface growth, which would be beyond the power of individual cultivators; but such joint action naturally depends on the nature of the soil cultivated. It will be noticed, first, that this system is just as dependent on the central position of the family as the other; secondly, that it is at once less complicated and artificial than the other, and much nearer to instances outside India previously examined; and, thirdly, that it appears to reflect the arrangements that would naturally follow the acquisition of tribal lands from actual enemies as well as from the jungle.[2]

[1] Ihering, "Civilisation of the Aryans," p. 35, lays stress on the absence of references to filial affection in Hindu literature, and attributes the practice of "sati" to male selfishness. If he is right, the consciousness of a family bond must have been all the stronger to survive without the aids of affection and personal loyalty.

[2] See Hearn, W. A., "The Aryan Household"; Baden-Powell, B. H., "The Indian Village Community."

The Chinese are as distinct in race from the Hindus as are the Semites of Western Asia. Yet their family system is strangely similar. We find everywhere some form of joint-family and the economic subordination of the woman. But family organisation is chiefly important to the Chinese mind because of its connexion with the two great essentials of life, ancestor worship and filial piety. For the ordinary Chinaman, ancestors are the only proper objects of worship. For great nobles and officers of State, the number of ancestral temples is strictly regulated by custom. The poorest peasant bases all his hopes on the existence of a son to perform the due rites to him after his death. The emperor alone worships Heaven, but that is because Heaven is his own ancestor ; no one else would presume to claim such high lineage. Thus, to the orthodox Chinaman, the perpetuation of the family is not simply the concern of the living, but of all the generations of the dead.

An even more important place, alike in the sacred writings and in the conduct of daily life, is taken by the duty of filial piety. The sages were never tired of expatiating on all the accessory and subsidiary duties which flowed from reverence to parents. The utmost gratitude was for ever due to them from their son for their gift to him of his own body. A single rough word against them would be a crime, yet no harsh treatment on their part could be enough to evoke a protest. One of the most characteristic acts of the sage Lao-Tsze, it is said, was his visit to his father and mother when he himself was seventy years of age ; he played on the floor and prattled like a child before them, in order that, by imagining him a mere infant, they might have the joy of

believing themselves still in mature life. "While his parents are alive, a son will not have wealth that he calls his own." "A son and his wife should not presume to borrow from or give anything to another person. If anyone gives the wife an article of food or dress, a piece of silk or cloth, a handkerchief for her girdle, an iris or orchid, she should receive it and offer it to her parents-in-law. If they return it to her, she should decline it, or, if they do not allow this, take it as a second gift, and lay it by till they want it." [1] Treachery to the State, insincerity to friends, malversation in office, and impropriety of personal demeanour, are all unfilial; nothing worse could be said of them. As in India, the husband can divorce the wife; the wife cannot divorce the husband; and a husband may kill the wife whom he takes in adultery.

VII. It is thus clear that in all the leading types of the civilisations of the world the family has been the pivot of life, the real unit in society, economics, and religion. To us, such an arrangement seems highly artificial. So much the less can it be an accident that the family, in this general shape, has endured and flourished among races so diverse as the Mongolians, the Semites, and the different branches of the Aryan stock; and in regions so diverse as the vast river-valleys of China and the sweltering plains of India and Mesopotamia, the bare hill-sides of Palestine and the forests of central Germany, the steppes of Russia and the trim fields, whether tilled by yeomen or slaves, around the cities of Greece and Italy or the towns and castles of mediæval Europe.

[1] "Lî Kî," translated by James Legge in "Sacred Books of the East," xxvii. 69, 458. Compare also "Analects," bk. xiv. ch. xlv.; bk. xv. ch. xxiii.

Amidst all their diversity, these societies have one thing in common. And herein they all differ from the industrial life of modern England. They all rest on agriculture. They touch the soil. The cities of antiquity were what we should call country towns. Both the merchant and the artisan existed, but for centuries theirs was a subordinate rôle. When at last they succeeded in becoming politically important, the great landmarks of social life and law were fixed and could not be altered. Nor, with the one great exception already referred to, has agriculture ever been ousted from its position as the premier industry of the country. To till the land, as the old Hebrew writer thought of it, was at once the primal blessing and the primal curse. In every society where agriculture is prominent will be found the strength of the family.[1]

There is another common characteristic in the societies which we have been considering, religion. The members of the family are always participants in the family worship. The gods of the family may be distinct from the gods worshipped by the whole nation, or identical with them. The prayers may be offered to deified ancestors, or to spirits whose worship is simply traditional. But religion is a force that always makes for stability; and when agriculture has ceased to be the one common factor in the life of a society, religion will often preserve the general form of that society unchanged.

If then the family in history is broadly coincident

[1] Ihering (*op. cit.*) holds that the Aryans were at first shepherds, the Semites husbandmen and builders of cities; Cain the farmer kills Abel the shepherd, and builds a town. Such speculations as to prehistoric times are of interest, and may help to account for various survivals; but they do not affect social institutions in periods of which we have fuller knowledge.

with the prominence of agriculture and the existence of a certain type of religion, whence arose the divergences already noticed? It is a dangerous thing, in any sociological discussion, to mark off too clearly causes from effects. What at first sight appear to be causes very often turn out to be effects, and vice versa. And we know far too little of what we choose to call causes to predict or even to recognise their effects with any certainty. Still, we can hardly be mistaken in finding the origin of diversities in the differing circumstances in which the family institution has found itself placed. That institution, like most others, is as plastic as the human body, and must always adapt itself to its environment.

We must therefore connect the existence of the larger family, among the Slavs, with life in wide and unfertile regions, where sparseness of population left political bonds loose, and agriculture for a long time had not superseded the wilder life of the chase. Among the Mediterranean peoples, the greater fertility of the land led to the cultivation of smaller independent holdings; hence the size of the family unit is found to decrease. The more abundant population led to a more elaborate organisation, and the little state, which had to fight hard for its existence, required citizens and householders rather than heads of large family communities. "It is when the gens has settled upon the land that the family begins to appear as a fact of importance." [1] The same cause can be seen at work amongst the Israelites, as they settled down to farm, and often to fight, in the midst of the Canaanites. With them, the small family has an importance, in comparison

[1] Fowler, W. Warde, "Religious Experience of the Roman People," p. 70.

with the tribe, which it never gained among the more loosely knit Arabs of the desert. In Babylonia the advance of commercial and industrial life aided the evolution of the smaller family, or household; the structure of the Babylonian family is indeed in many ways the most modern of any that we have considered in this chapter. In China the predominantly peaceful character of its history and the centralisation of government left the larger family unmodified, save in its ethical elaboration. In India we might have expected some such development as took place in Italy and Greece; that the joint undivided family persisted would seem to be owing to the unmilitary character of the Aryan Hindu, the peaceful permeation by which, for the most part, he overspread Northern India, the homogeneous nature of a great deal of the country in which he settled, and the pride of family which made him dislike subdividing his estate. The resulting poverty of the cultivating class has tended to make any further organisation or subdivision difficult.

Was the family, as an institution, the cause of the family religion, or its effect? We have not yet the materials for an answer to this question; but it is easy to see how close is the connexion, in all the types we have studied, between the character of the religion and that of the family. This is especially true of Israel. It cannot be doubted, again, that the keen civic and legal sense of the Greeks and Romans gave precision, in each case, to the idea of paternal authority and to the conditions and limits of inheritance, which are all furnished with religious sanctions.

This idea, however, is itself religious. Religion,

in the early stages of the growth of the human mind, attaches itself to whatever is recognised as a duty by the majority of men living together. The duties may be extraordinarily different from one another in different places ; the sense of religious veneration which leads to their scrupulous performance will be the same. If then specific duties and human relationships result from the existence of the family, as modified by its particular surroundings, the character of the religion would seem to be a result of the same thing. But was the family institution the parent of religion itself ? Or was it the case that the family and religion existed side by side from the first, and that in the course of their long history they have been influenced and moulded by one another ? Or did some original feeling of reverent awe to the gods itself beget the veneration for ancestors and submission to parents which have marked the more prominent civilisations of East and West alike ? We shall attempt to decide this point later on ; but whatever the decision may turn out to be, it will leave untouched, but impressive, the alliance between the two throughout the great middle period of the history of the race.

VIII. So far, then, we have found two elements in the family, a permanent and universal, and a changing and particular. Everywhere there are groups of kinsmen, with their women, recognising certain mutual obligations to each other and sharing a common household stock and a common worship. Everywhere, too, there are diversities in the number of the members of the group, in their relative positions and authority and general freedom of action, and in the relation of the group to the larger unity of the tribe or state. Granted the permanent

element, we can understand the changing characteristics. If we may start from the group, we can see how conditions of locality, temperament, government, and the like will make a community interested in emphasising now one aspect of the life of the group, and now another. We can hardly suppose that any section of humanity has been fired with devotion to the abstract ideal of the family as such. Humanity has been led, in all ages, by what it has from time to time considered to be to its interest or advantage. Men do not sit down, as Herodotus described the Persian nobles sitting down, to discuss under what institutions they shall live—an aristocracy or a democracy, a joint undivided family system or a system of independent small holders. They feel their way forward through the jungle of circumstance, not on the high road of theory.[1]

But did they, in the first instance, feel their way forward to the family in this fashion? Has it really been permanent and original? If it holds good of the sections of the human race which we have been examining, does it hold good of the whole area of that vast circle? If it does, by what necessity of human existence has it sprung into this universal activity? If not, what have been its antecedents and originators? Where has it appeared, and why has it selected some races for its blessings, and left others in neglect?

To answer these questions is the task of a fresh chapter. To determine whether the family is universal, and to discover the manner of its arising,

[1] "Life in general may be looked upon as a republic where the individuals are, for the most part, unconscious that while they are working for themselves they are also working for the common good."—Galton, "Inquiries into Human Faculty," p. 195. *Cp.* T. H. Green, "Prolegomena," p. 230.

we must pass from history to the prehistoric, or rather to the dubious study of those races of mankind which have no history. But we need not despair. The path has often been travelled, and if perplexities occur, they are really more likely to result from the multiplicity of guides than from the obscurity of the track.

CHAPTER III

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE FAMILY

I. WHEN philosophers in the past have turned their attention to the world of the uncivilised and the savage, they have generally been led to one of two very distinct conceptions. Some have thought with wistful envy of a time "when wild in woods the noble savage ran," free from

> "The weariness, the fever, and the fret,
> Here where men sit and hear each other groan,"

untainted by modern diseases, unsophisticated by modern problems, uncorrupted by the later institution of private property, and not yet caricatured in the clumsy garments invented by his foolish descendants. Free to fulfil every generous impulse of his nature, he would have looked with scorn on the enslaved tribes of both rich and poor—could he have seen them—who crowd the cities of to-day. To such a godlike "state of nature," as Rousseau used to proclaim to the fops and philosophers of the eighteenth century, we should be indeed wise, or fortunate, to return.

Another cast of mind has contemplated the rude lairs of primeval man with a shudder. To the civil Roman thoughts of Lucretius and Horace, the results of centuries of progress would have been matter of sincere thankfulness to the gods, were there any gods to be believed in. Our English Hobbes put

the matter still more bluntly when he described the life of primitive man as " brutish, nasty, ignorant, and short." How could peace survive when law was not yet born ? How could comfort be known when fire was an untamed mystery, a corn-field had never been seen, and man walked in daily fear of jaguar and cave-bear ? Every nation, however firmly in its story-telling moments it has believed in an age of gold, has regarded the means and weapons of its infant civilisation as nothing less than the gifts of Heaven bestowed upon a rough and miserable state of savagery.

The researches of modern anthropologists have brought these oscillations of thought to an end. The manner of life of our own remotest ancestors is sought in the " primitive " folk of to-day. We study the beginnings of human society in men and women who are our own contemporaries, just as the telescope shows us each evening rays of light which started their journey to the earth years before we were born. And the result is that Rousseau stands in as much need of correction as Hobbes. If nobility can be predicated of the savage, here and there, a good many less pleasant things must be predicated as well. His habits are often repulsive ; his morals are sometimes, to polite ears, indescribable ; much that he tolerates and even glories in reveals the old Hebrew writer's conclusion that " the dark places of the earth are full of cruelty." Yet the fact remains that for very few savage tribes is life an unrelieved misery ; that it often exhibits considerable cheerfulness and gaiety ; that most untutored peoples know a great deal about good fellowship and mutual help, affection and self-restraint ; and that, if we attempt to strike a

balance of happiness between them and, let us say, the average unskilled labourer and his wife, in an English town, the advantage is by no means certain to remain in the country of progress and light.[1]

It is to this simple and primitive society that we must turn if the questions raised at the end of the last chapter are to find an answer. If the family flourishes wherever civilisation has been achieved, its rise will have to be watched among men who are ignorant of civilisation's ambiguous favours. Let us then set ourselves to examine, with some closeness, the social and family institutions of savage peoples.

But is this, it may be asked, really a useful proceeding ? Are the anthropologists right when they assume that simplicity and originality are identical ? Hardly, if the assumption is quite so bold as this. For savages, as we may study them to-day, are at all stages of development ; few have been quite uninfluenced by the contact of more advanced races ; none live under a regime that is perfectly stable. Some appear to be slowly advancing ; others are demonstrably deteriorating, either through inborn causes of decay, or the malign influence of the ubiquitous European.

But the anthropologist himself is ready to take account of all this. His method is comparative. He puts one set of tribal customs by the side of another, and asks what they have in common ; what psychological principle underlies the rite or

[1] See, for example, two of the most recent studies of primitive peoples, Seligmann, C. G. and B. Z., "The Veddahs," pp. 44, 198, and Routledge, W. S. and K., "The Akikuyu." Gomes, E. H., "Seventeen Years among the Sea Dyaks," pp.194 ff, describes the kindness, frugality, honesty, and cheerful friendliness with their gods which characterise a people supposed to be peculiarly ferocious.

taboo in question. But he also proceeds deductively. Granted the existence of what travellers or investigators may describe, what must have preceded? What must have been the customs of those dim earlier days, out of which even the ignorant and childlike Patagonian or Batak has through long ages come to be the elusive and problematical creature he is?

So understood, the method, however difficult, cannot well be other than correct. For, in the first place, the whole scheme of the history of mankind, and indeed of all living things, is from the simpler to the more complex. As we travel backwards from the history of our own times, we find it is to these simpler races that we are drawing nearer. In fact, the Homeric Greek and the early Hebrew—to say nothing of the Germans of the days of Tacitus and Cæsar—seem to have as much of the savage as of their own cultured descendants wrapped up within them.

Secondly, the so-called "primitive" races, though found in every region and tropic of the globe, exhibit curious and surprising likenesses to each other. The spread of modern culture, in giving us the same type of town life from San Francisco to St Petersburg, from Aberdeen to Naples or to Melbourne, is only restoring a unity of thoughts and habits familiar alike among North American Indians and Australian blackfellows, and spreading from the Gold Coast to the Malay Peninsula. It is impossible, however, to suppose that such similarities can be the result of the approximating and levelling forces of inter-communication. Did primitive races, under the impulse of some sublime missionary zeal, carry their customs

and myths in their frail canoes to their far-off neighbours across the Atlantic or Pacific? How can we explain these marks of kinship unless we regard them as the results of a widespread condition of homogeneous primitiveness, just as we find that the earliest biological organisms are the same in every continent of the earth's surface? Infinitely diverse as are savage tribes—like all other forms of life upon the earth—they are yet near enough to one another in essentials to allow us to arrive at a very satisfactory common denominator.

Thirdly, if we make this assumption, we find that we can explain the more developed institutions of later social life; that is, we can see that these varying and complicated institutions may well have arisen in those simpler conditions of life, and thence have gradually developed into the diverse forms which they exhibit to-day. Indeed, if we had no knowledge of savage races, and were to try to construct an imaginary ancestor for the civilised persons whom we know, we should either arrive at the typical savage with whom anthropologists have made us familiar, or at a hypothetical creature whom, as a possible progenitor, we should instantly reject if we subsequently discovered a Kaffir or a Polynesian or an Esquimaux.

This, however, is not to deny the possibility of degeneration in many of the uncivilised peoples of to-day. Degeneration is, indeed, an undoubted fact. Even apart from the disasters that always spring from the contact of higher with lower races, the knowledge both of manual arts and of moral restrictions may be lost; and war, pestilence, or scarcity may any one of them be sufficient to destroy the balance of activity and restraint on

which all human wellbeing depends. Progress, as regards the human race, would seem to be the exception rather than the rule. Decay is an ever-present possibility. All this makes our problem the harder. But it is not desperate. Properly speaking, evolution, as a scientific conception, knows neither progress nor decay. These are terms which imply moral values. Evolution deals only with change. The great problem of the anthropologist is to group the facts before him in such a way as to suggest some condition of society from which they may have been naturally produced; the more natural and easy the suggested process, the more probable the condition of society assumed.

II. Let us then advance into the strange jungle of primitive customs and ideas relating to the family, to see what can be learnt from them about its origins. At the very first, we find ourselves in a region where the family, as we know it, seems hardly to have found its way. Among the great, but now rapidly disappearing race of North American Indians, for example, kinship is reckoned not only by birth, as we understand it, but by membership in a totem group. No one may marry a member of his own totem group; there may even be only one group within the tribe from which a man can take his bride. Descent is often counted through the mother and not through the father. Among the Blackfeet, to take a definite instance, the names for mother and aunt are identical; so are those for elder brother and uncle, and also for cousin and brother, as well as for grandfather and father-in-law, grandmother and mother-in-law. The Blackfeet are divided into three clans, and each clan into about twelve "gentes"; there can properly be no

intermarriage within the gens. When a man dies, his wives become the potential wives of his eldest brother; while, on the other hand, the younger sisters of his own wife cannot be disposed of without his consent.

Among the Todas, again, an aboriginal tribe in the Nilgeris of Central India, where the men largely outnumber the women, no man has more than one wife; but a woman will have several husbands, and descent, as in the previous instance, is reckoned through the mother.[1] In Fiji, it is considered the correct thing for a man to marry his cousin on his father's side; to marry a cousin on the mother's side would be as unheard-of as to marry a sister. The mother's brother, or *vasu*, has the duty of affording a general protection to the mother and her children, and the children have a claim upon the property of the maternal uncle, even in his lifetime, which is regularly and with surprising willingness allowed.[2] In certain Arab and many other tribes, the so-called "beena" marriage is the rule, where the husband, instead of bringing the wife to his own home, takes up his residence in the family of his wife's father, and the children are all reckoned as belonging to the stock of their maternal grandfather.[3] In Australia and many parts of Polynesia, it is found that certain groups of men may theoretically have marriage relations with certain groups of women, but are debarred

[1] Polyandry is only found to-day among the lowest levels of culture, with the one exception of the Tibetans; and in almost all cases the husbands of one wife must be brothers. See Westermarck, E., "History of Human Marriage," p. 453.

[2] See Rivers, W. H. H., "The Todas"; Thomson, B., "The Fijians," p. 75.

[3] See Smith, W. Robertson, "Kinship and Marriage" (Ed. 1903), pp. 208, 264. *Cf.* Gen. xxxi. 43.

from ever having anything to do with all other women of the tribe. A child will call all members of his father's group by the name of father, all members of his mother's group by the name of mother; while a married man will use to all the women of the related group the one word in the language which conveys the meaning of wife. It must not be supposed that all the men in the group treat all the women in the corresponding group as their wives; but it is easy to see that when language has no other terms than those for group relationships, we are face to face with something very different from our own family system. Confined within these limits, monogamy may and at certain times does pass with ease into something much worse than polygamy.

These and scores of other yet generally similar instances can all be paralleled from the observations made by classical writers on their barbarian neighbours. Actual promiscuity is asserted by Herodotus and others of many tribes in Scythia and Northern Africa; this probably does not mean that there were no restrictions of marriage, but that existing restrictions were not those with which the writers were familiar, and therefore were not discovered by them. Early observers supposed that the Australian natives practised promiscuity; whereas, as a matter of fact, we shall find that their marriage system is extraordinarily complex and severe. Greek writers were constantly surprised to find metronymy, or the system of naming children after the mother and not after the father, among barbarians. In certain bilingual inscriptions the Etruscan text gives only the name of the mother, while the Latin gives the name of the father. In Egypt we find

tombs where the Egyptian text gives the mother's name and the Greek the father's.[1]

Now, in spite of the surprise which we, like the Greek historians, may feel at these instances, they must not be considered exceptional. When once we drop below the great civilisations of the world, as we were considering them in the last chapter, we find that these strange institutions become the rule. Inside certain limits, indeed, the variety observable in the practices of the lower races is enormous. Who may marry whom? What amount of individual choice can be exercised? How long does the marriage last? Who is responsible for the children? What amount of personal security has the wife? To whom is the property—if there is any—allowed to descend? How is unchastity regarded? When we ask such questions as these, we find the most bewilderingly diverse answers, and we begin to wonder whether our study of primitive peoples can lead us to any conclusion about origins at all. It is only, however, when we realise the diversity that we can appreciate the large uniformities which underly it.

III. Rightly understood, the uniformities are equally striking. In all parts of the world, we find the existence of well-defined matrimonial groups within the tribe; these are either exogamous (that is, allowing marriage between members of different groups alone) or, less frequently, endogamous (that is, only allowing marriage between persons of the same group). The commonest arrangement is for the group to be exogamous and the tribe endogamous. Again, there are often two sets of these groups: certain Australian tribes are divided

[1] Teulon, "Origine de la Famille," p. 21.

into two exogamous " phratries," as they are generally called, and these are subdivided into totem kins, and a further division creates the marriage groups referred to previously; at the same time, the inter-relations of individuals are so carefully noted that the names for relatives in the Australian tables of kindred and affinity put the English language to shame.[1]

It is indeed impossible to combine into one sentence the diverse arrangements of the various sub-divisions of the widespread Australian race. Nor for our present purpose is it necessary. Probably, in despite of the industry now being lavished upon them, many of these tribes will have died out before all the facts of their marriage customs are known, much less satisfactorily interpreted. The tendency, familiar among anthropologists at present, to view the early history of mankind through Australian spectacles, as Westermarck has expressed it, is the more unreliable, since those spectacles are as yet so crudely finished. At the same time, amidst all the diversities, a general type of marriage idea can be observed, which has been represented symbolically as follows: there are four divisions in the tribe (resulting from birth or totem groups or both), *a*, *b*, *c*, *d*. A youth of *a*, can marry only a girl from *b*; *b* can marry only *a*; *d* marries *c*, and *c* marries *d*. The children are sometimes reckoned to the group of which their mother is a member; or they are placed in a group to which neither father nor mother belongs; thus, $a + b = c$; $d + c = b$—a very effective means, whether con-

[1] See Spencer, B., and Gillen, F. J., "The Native Tribes of Central Australia," chaps. ii., iii.; Thomas, N. W., "The Australian Marriage Systems," pp. 31 ff.

scious or not, for preventing the marriage of near relations.

These intricate arrangements, it must be remembered, are carried out for every member of the tribe by a people who cannot count beyond five, who have never known either a chieftain or a priest, and who are completely ignorant even of the most elementary kinds of cooking and agriculture. This complexity of family organisation, coupled with the lowliness of their position in the scale of human culture, has made them the objects of special interest.[1] In examining them we have seemed to come as near as could ever be possible to primitive man. But the Australian is not unique. His only difference from other races separated from him by impassable leagues of ocean is that their marriage arrangements, though similar, are somewhat less complex than his, and that their knowledge of the arts of life is not so rudimentary.

Again, reckoning by female descent is far more common, among savage tribes, than the system familiar to us. A man is much more intimately bound to his relations on his mother's than on his father's side. And further, marriage is everywhere surrounded by taboos or ceremonial restrictions, many of which seem to suggest the carrying off of an unwilling bride from her resisting friends; in many cases the bride must not speak to her husband or mention his name (as in the story of Cupid and Psyche, which, like so many traditional tales, enshrines genuine references to ancient and

[1] Mr W. E. Roth, after ten years' intimacy with the natives of Northern Australia, has a very high opinion of their intelligence. "The savage only appears stupid because the unwary traveller does not understand him." The traveller may also appear stupid to the savage. See also Seligmann, *op. cit.* p. 397.

partly forgotten customs), or even see him; or meetings between them have to be arranged clandestinely. Among the Bantu, a woman must not even pronounce a word which contains the emphatic syllable of her husband's name.[1]

Again, the unmarried youths of a village or camp often sleep together in a kind of clubhouse (an institution as familiar to Fiji as to the Behring Strait Esquimaux or the Nagas of Manipur); sometimes even the married men use this house, and only sleep with their families occasionally. As a general rule, marriage is never allowed till the youth has undergone certain initiation ceremonies, which vary from fasting and seclusion with instruction by the older men of the tribe, to circumcision and the complicated mutilations cheerfully endured by the Australian natives. Similar restrictions and ceremonies are generally enforced with regard to the girls of the tribe. Equally diverse are the customs connected with the breaking of the marriage bond. Sometimes quite trivial matters may be considered sufficient ground for divorce—laziness or quarrelsomeness; in other cases, prolonged absence or disease, or nothing except adultery or death. If any dowry has been given with the wife, this will generally have to be returned to the wife's family. Sometimes chastity before marriage, in one or both sexes, is regarded as of very little importance, or it may be jealously guarded.[2] But the point which must not be overlooked is that, whatever the custom in these matters may be, some definite and understood custom always exists, and

[1] See Kidd, D., "The Essential Kaffir," p. 241.

[2] Examples of the latter may be found in Westermarck, "Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas," ii. pp. 422-455; of the former in Hartland, E. S., "Primitive Paternity," concluding chapter.

it is enforced, unless civilised strangers have broken it down, with resolution and energy.[1]

IV. Much of this may seem to have a good deal more to do with marriage than with the structure and growth of the family. We shall see presently that marriage rules and customs have the closest bearing on the study of the family. Meanwhile, let it be noticed that, as we had to deal with patriarchal families in the more developed agricultural civilisations, we now find ourselves, in the predominantly hunting or nomadic stages of society which we have been considering, faced chiefly by what for convenience of contrast may be called the matriarchate.

Matrimonial groups, totem kins, initiation ceremonies all tend to coincide with a state of culture where the tilling of the soil is subordinate to the acquisition of food by hunting ; and in these states, the child will generally be found to be regarded as a member of his mother's family, and to look to his mother's brothers as well as to his father—sometimes, instead of to his father—for support and protection. The term must not be taken to imply that in what is called a matriarchal[2] society the mother has the control and influence which the father wields elsewhere. The mother may be *in esse* the slave of the father, as, *de jure*, she was under the Roman Republic. Where the authority is not exercised by the father it will be exercised by the mother's relatives. The noteworthy point is that, however little authority she may possess

[1] The literature on the whole subject is enormous. The general reader will find many illustrations of the foregoing, and fuller references, in Frazer, J. G., " Psyche's Task," ch. iv. ; Westermarck, *op. cit.*, especially chaps. xxvi. and xl. ; and Parsons, E. C., " The Family," lectures 7, 8, 9.

[2] It would doubtless be better to substitute the term " matrilinear " for " matriarchal."

over the members of the family, for the structure and composition of the family she is all-important.

We seem thus led to the general conclusion that as the hunting stage preceded the farming, so the matriarchate, marked by certain widespread characteristics, preceded the patriarchate. This conclusion is strengthened when we examine the intermediate or pastoral stage, where we find the social territory disputed by matriarchal and patriarchal customs. But the patriarchal are everywhere seen to be gaining the victory. Among pastoral peoples, the evidences of a matriarchal stage may be recognised in the " beena " marriages, where the husband, in Ceylon and Arabia and elsewhere, enters the household of his father-in-law, or in the Masai custom of the segregation of youths from their families in separate camps. But these are either survivals or the result of the actual necessities or conveniences of a cattle-tending society. As Grosse has pointed out,[1] a society of cattle-owners always exhibits male predominance. The duty of looking after the cattle, in the pasture or the dairy, is regularly assigned to the men, or claimed by them, as for instance among the Kaffirs, the Masai, and the " matriarchal " Todas. To women, the cattle sheds or kraals are, for the most part, strictly taboo. To the women falls the less important task of tillage. While the whole territory over which the tribe wanders belongs to the tribe itself, the herds generally belong to separate families, and the father is supreme over the children and women alike. Nothing can be clearer than that the advance from hunting wild animals to herding tame ones means a relative depreciation of what we may call the

[1] " Die Formen der Familie und die Formen der Wirthschaft," p. 131.

sociological status of women; individually, a woman may count for more in the milder conditions of pastoral life; but in the organisation of society she ceases to be the official transmitter of the life of the family, the sole guarantee of continuity in the constituent members of the clan and tribe.

The problem of the origin of the family has now become the problem of the origin of the matriarchate. How did these matrimonial groups, with their accompanying insistence on female rather than on male descent, come into being? Were they an invention? If so, we might find some justification, after all, for the suggestions of Plato or the modern advocates of the abolition of the family. If the family was called into being by human will and ingenuity, it might conceivably be destroyed by the same factors. But this hypothesis is surrounded by difficulties; first, because the matriarchate is universal among those very societies which seem most akin to primitive man; second, because there are no traces of the existence of any society to which the invention—if such it be—has not been communicated; and thirdly, because all our knowledge shows that such institutions are not invented.

Human beings do not divide themselves into groups, or organise themselves into definite tribes and families. Hobbes, indeed, supposed that this was possible, and suggested that the indiscriminate state of warfare with which he imagined human life to begin was brought to an end by the formation of a compact; "this strife of all against all makes life unbearable; let us appoint a ruler and give him enough authority to force us to keep our hands off each other's throats." [1] Examples of such an

[1] See Hobbes, "Leviathan," bk. i. ch. xiii., bk. ii. ch. xvii.

artificial manipulation of society may be seen in the institution of Calvin's republic at Geneva, or in the history of the French Revolution ; but, among savages, the force both of custom and of the passions is too strong, and imagination is too weak, for such a reform to be possible.

V. If, then, the matriarchal family grew, what did it grow from ? Were the earliest human beings promiscuous, mating like the animals ? Even as regards many species of animals and birds, promiscuity does not hold good ; conjugal fidelity often lasts until the birth of offspring, or even considerably longer. Complete promiscuity appears to be common only among gregarious species, and it is naturally extended under conditions of domestication and for purposes of breeding. For human beings there is no evidence of promiscuity whatever. Promiscuity has indeed been advanced as a hypothesis,[1] but no one has succeeded in showing either how or why it should have universally given way to the group system as that system is found among rudimentary peoples.

It has been argued that the group system implies an earlier absence of all restriction, for the following reasons. Where a group may intermarry with only one other group, the members of the first will call the members of the second indiscriminately by the names of husband or wife, or, if they are of different generations, father or mother. This suggests that at one time, within the group, the individuals were actually husbands and wives, and therefore possible fathers and mothers to one

[1] As by Bachofen, "Das Mutterrecht," and M'Lennan, J. F., "Studies in Ancient History." The latter supposed that the race gave up an unrestricted sexual freedom for the appropriation of one woman to several men.

another. And if this was the custom within the group, must it not have been, still earlier, a custom without any group restrictions? Allowing that this argument is correct, it leads to the conclusion that general promiscuity was repudiated, ages ago, by the lowest savages, once and for all. But, as a matter of fact, this cannot be assumed. That the words which we translate by "husband" and "wife" are applied to several individuals certainly does not prove that corresponding marital rights were ever exercised; the distinction between the actual husband and the member of the "husband" group is too well understood to allow us to make that supposition, and the alleged instances of survival of actual group marriage can all be explained in some other way.[1]

Further, the group system, in every one of its varied forms, is not a modification of promiscuity; it is based on a definite principle, that sexual desire must conform to certain social and moral restrictions, whereas promiscuity is based on no principle at all; it is, indeed, the denial of any principle, the negation of any kind of social structure, and, if existent, it could only lead to social suicide. Whatever arguments may be adduced for the destruction of marriage restrictions at the present day, the appeal to primitive history is not one of their number. On the contrary, the earliest forms of society show the principle of restriction at its strongest, and all social advance has meant the struggle to preserve and safeguard its most valuable features.

[1] See Westermarck, *op. cit.*, ii. 396; Hobhouse, *op. cit.*, i. 139 note, who suggests that the stages in the history of marriage may have been (1) temporary mating; (2) a taboo on all women recognised as of the same blood or totem; (3) group marriage; (4) more permanent unions, polygamous or monogamous.

Many writers have urged the claims of marriage by capture, or of marriage by purchase, to be the original form. Both are intended to explain the custom of exogamy, whereby the husband always seeks a wife from an alien tribe or group. The facts in support of these views really neutralise each other. There is no more to be said for one of them than for the other. Neither could have given place universally to the other. Each is the natural result of certain conditions and modes of life, and each would easily co-exist with the other. Each might exist along with the system of matrimonial groups; but both alike are too partial, either in their operation or in their actual distribution, to have originated so deep-seated an attitude of the sexes to one another as is implied by exogamy. Did the seizures of women belonging to another tribe by the Romans and the men of Benjamin suggest to the captors that no Roman or Benjamite should ever marry a woman of his own tribe? Because Jacob had to buy his wives by years of service in a foreign land,[1] would all his sons feel compelled to buy theirs on the same terms? And can a society be imagined in which either capture or purchase would be inevitable for so long that the very idea of any other method of marriage would become odious? [2]

Another suggestion, which originated with Darwin,

[1] The custom of hiring oneself out to the father of a prospective bride is said to be found in the Caroline Islands (Christian, F. W., "The Caroline Islands," p. 74).

[2] Readers of Thomas Hardy will remember the modern instance of the sale of a wife with which he commences "The Mayor of Casterbridge." Among the Masai there appears to be an elaborate tariff of bride prices. See Merker, H., "Die Masai," p. 46.

and has been developed by Andrew Lang,[1] lays stress upon sexual jealousy. In the earliest society, it is supposed, before there were any marriage groups or rules, perhaps before there were any living beings who could properly be called human at all, the adult males would drive away the lads when they first reached the stage of manhood, and re-admit them to their band or camp only when they had engaged or submitted to find their own wives elsewhere. These bands would then have to be named—perhaps originally nicknamed; and these names would give rise, gradually, to the totem-kin, that is, to a group of people called by the same animal or plant nickname (bear, wolf, crow, or witchetty-grub), and coming to believe themselves in some way bound by a mysterious and sacred blood relationship to all the members of the animal or plant species after which they were called. Along with the totem-kin, female descent would thus become a familiar and organised institution. Later, two or three of these groups might combine socially, still keeping the rule of exogamy with regard to one another; and then others would come in, ranging themselves with one or other of the original allies. This would give us a state of society like that existing in Australia, where we have the two "phratries" and the subordinate totem groups.

A theory in which Mr Lang's imagination has been at work is always alluring; but there are two difficulties in the foregoing account not easily overcome. It is true that the theory does not actually assume an original promiscuity; it rather supposes that early man lived in small isolated

[1] Darwin, "Descent of Man," pp. 601-5; Lang, A., "Secret of the Totem."

groups, in the fashion of gorillas or chimpanzees. But would jealousy be likely to play such a part as is here described? It is difficult to find examples of such conduct either in the human or the animal world, and unless the little group lived in some earthly paradise where there were no enemies to be feared and where food was always plentiful, the younger males would be too valuable to be got rid of just when they were on the point of attaining the strength and dignity of manhood. Secondly, the theory implies that the woman, whether obtained by capture or agreement, is forced to forget her kindred and her father's house; her children live with her in her husband's group; whereas the so-called matriarchal system constantly shows us the mother's family, not the father's, accepting and discharging responsibilities for the child. It is a question whether, human nature being what it is, Mr Lang's hypothetical group could ever have been anything but patriarchal.

Such are the chief views upon this puzzling question. None seem to lead to any satisfactory conclusion. There appears to be no bridge from the supposed primitive human "pack" to human society as it shows itself to us even in its most rudimentary forms. Then was the marriage group system original, and co-eval with the earliest human society?[1] If this question is asked, we can only answer with another: Which marriage group system? For we have seen that while exogamous groups exist everywhere, their laws and regulations are infinitely diverse. But in this new difficulty lies

[1] Cunow, "Die Australneger," holds that class was naturally older than clan, and rooted in the natural differences of age between different generations.

our way out of the maze. If we were dealing with any one form of exogamy, we should find it impossible to explain how our human progenitors could either have adopted so complicated an arrangement or started with it. But we have already found it possible for a single principle to exist while its forms are numerous and divergent.[1] These forms, again, are shaped by many different influences—racial, climatic, economic, and even religious. Now, however widely social arrangements may differ in detail, all our knowledge of human society points to the fact that desire is not allowed to be wanderingly or casually indulged. We must leave on one side our modern ideas of personal chastity, which, though sometimes meeting us unexpectedly even in the jungle, are the result, first, of ages of civilisation, and, to a larger extent, of centuries of Christianity. But we can see clearly enough that in all the earlier stages of human life each individual is aware of a certain number or class of women with whom he must not think of marriage; and when once he has formed marriage relations outside the group, he recognises that they entail certain obligations upon himself—however slight to our thinking—as well as upon his wife, the maintenance of which will be enforced by society.

Why should not this attitude be co-eval with human life? Is it indeed impossible that in those dim ages through which, as most anthropologists suppose, the two-legged half-upright muttering creature was slowly growing into a man, there should have been an instinctive sexual shrinking from union with certain familiar individuals of the opposite sex? Or if, as some modern biological

[1] See p. 50.

theories would suggest, "homo sapiens" arose, in sudden completeness, by some wonderful example of mutation, may he not have discovered within himself this feeling of restraint along with the rest of his mental furniture—the desires, the emotions, the powers of attention, interest and memory, which are as strong in the savage as in the product of civilisation? Evolution cannot account for the presence of these latter. She can only observe them and note their development, and reflect how necessary they are to man's continued existence on the earth. She is unable to do more, simply because she cannot find anything that can be called man where these are absent. Why may not she do the same with the sense of sexual restraint? To refuse is, first, to postulate a purely hypothetical creature, and secondly, to leap a chasm, from that hypothetical ancestor, to human beings as we know them, over which no bridge has ever been thrown.

The problem before us is very similar to that of the rise of the universal and instinctive horror of incest, or the marriage of very near blood relations. This appears to be inexplicable on utilitarian grounds, since, however dangerous such unions may be, their evil consequences can hardly be supposed to have been patent to primitive savages; and, further, such acts are the objects of a repulsion which mere imprudence, however reckless and perilous, could not arouse. Moreover, in many tribes this horror attaches to unions where no dangerous consequences would be likely to result; nor can the physiological facts, so far as we understand them, even to-day, be said to point all in one direction. Hobhouse[1] quotes with approval an opinion of Lotze, that this

[1] "Morals in Evolution," i. p. 148.

feeling is "the mind's protest against the blending of two distinct attitudes towards the same person." You can no more feel parental or fraternal love and sexual love at the same time for the same person than you can feel both love and hate. But the two cases are hardly alike. The second is a psychological impossibility; the first is a moral outrage. It is not that a state of mind which would tolerate or even prompt to incest is inconceivable; we know, unhappily, that it is not;[1] it is the act itself which the moral sense of mankind refuses to permit. At the same time, even if Lotze's explanation would cover the horror of incest as we understand it, it would not apply to those wider restrictions which are looked upon with equal horror in other communities.

Another reason is suggested by Westermarck; he falls back on physiology, and points out that where persons have been brought up or have lived long together, sexual desire does not arise. To this we must reply, as to Lotze, that it is not a case of what cannot, but what must not happen; further, most people are aware that it is possible for the strongest sexual affection to arise between persons who have been in close contact with one another from infancy; and Westermarck's view, like Lotze's, has nothing to say to the feeling about restrictions which are entirely independent of personal intercourse and family life in our modern sense. Hobhouse adds: "Like other truths of the same kind, it is not to be explained by calling it an instinct, but by analysing its nature and explaining its

[1] For such a state of mind as induced by modern urban conditions, see Webb., S and B., "The Prevention of Destitution," p. 306. On the other hand, it is often urged that co-education obviates immorality among the young, as introducing conditions as similar as possible to those of family life.

functions." Such analysis and explanation is what we are attempting to carry out; but if we can neither see any signs of its growth, nor discover any reasons—physiological, psychological or economic—for its appearance in a society where it was unknown before, are we not compelled to admit that, as far as our present knowledge goes (a proviso necessary in making any assertion whatsoever) it was there at the beginning? [1]

VI. "Natura non facit per saltum." We cannot fix upon any stage in the development of society as witnessing the birth of the family. However broadly, or narrowly, we define the term "family," we can never, as we trace backwards the line of human development, venture to say "Here it disappears." That would be as impossible as to say of a definite day in the life of a normal infant, "Now is born love for father or mother." What we do see very clearly, as we approach nearer to the beginning of things, is that the family is of less importance, relatively, than the tribe. Formerly, it was held that the tribe grew out of an aggregation of families, as the people of Israel is represented, in the Hebrew writings, as growing out of the families of the twelve patriarchs. This conclusion was natural to those who knew little of society save the conditions of modern Europe and sections of India, and the stories of early mankind found in their Bibles. But our study of the early history of the family shows this view to be impossible. It is within the

[1] Durckheim, "Année Sociologique," i. pp. 47-57, attributes the horror of incest to the dread of violating the sanctity of the blood of the totem by marrying a wife of the same totem. Such a suggestion seems at once rather far-fetched and itself in need of explanation (compare Thomas N. W. (*op. cit.*), pp. 86-92. Among the Masai (Merker, H., "Die Masai," p. 47), persons who have been initiated at the same periodic festival are not allowed to intermarry.

limits of the tribe that the family distinctions are found. The early family can only be described in terms of the tribe. The history of the family is the history of the increasing definiteness of these intra-tribal distinctions. When we contemplate primitive man, it is his tribe which first claims our attention. To his tribe and its chieftain is owed all his loyalty. The blood which flows in his veins is the blood of the tribe. Family life suggests to him but few duties, and equally few responsibilities. The growth of these is gradual and halting. The consciousness of the tribe is complete at the beginning.

All this may be freely admitted. The point where caution is necessary is the suggestion that, first of all, within the tribe, the family in this restricted sense did not exist at all. For such an assertion, as we have seen, there is absolutely no evidence. To argue that because the family occupies a large place in the agricultural stages of society, and a smaller place in the nomadic stages, it must, still earlier, have occupied no place at all, is like arguing that because the intellectual life is prominent in the man, and weak in the child, not even the rudiments of the intellect can be present in the baby. On the contrary, wherever we find man, we find the tribe. We cannot explain the origin of the tribe; we only know that it is there. Further, if the family is never found without the tribe, the tribe is never found without something corresponding to the family. Why, then, should it be forbidden to recognise that wherever we find man and the tribe, we find those intra-tribal distinctions and sexual regulations which lie at the bottom of the institution of the family, and that,

however complex they appear, their origin is sociologically quite explicable and simple ?

Westermarck [1] has urged that "all the evidence we possess tends to show that among our earliest human ancestors the family, not the tribe, formed the nucleus of every social group, and in many cases was itself perhaps the only social group. The tie that kept together husband and wife, parents and children, was, if not the only, at least the principal factor in the earliest forms of man's social life." This is not inconsistent with the statement that the family, as an organised institution, grew up within the tribe ; it is inconsistent with the belief that an age of promiscuity ever existed. Starcke goes further, and argues that the family came before the clan, and that the clan neglected the family and began to deal simply with individuals ; as the state arose, the clan decayed and the family became stronger once more. It is difficult, however, to draw such a definite line between clan and state, nor does the clan stage of society neglect the family. The facts are too complex for so simple a solution.

But, it may be asked, if the facts are complex, must not their origin be more complex still ? If we find systems of classification, the most complicated and the most diverse, in tribes admittedly the nearest to primitive man, must not the family laws of primitive man himself have been yet more wonderful and intricate ? A similar line of reasoning had led philologists to postulate the existence, in the original Aryan language, of an elaborate series of sounds and inflections to which Sanskrit and Persian are alike strangers. The history of language is a history of progressive simplification.

[1] "History of Human Marriage," p. 538.

And so, through many chapters, is the history of institutions. Human society advances, as Sir Henry Maine taught us long ago, from status to contract. If contract may be a complicated thing, status is infinitely more complicated—witness any mediæval manor-roll. But simplification is not the only historical process. The philologist may conclude that the Greeks could never have used five cases unless their remote ancestors had used ten (though we cannot help wondering with how many more cases the conversation of ancestors still more remote was burdened); but it would surely be precarious to argue that because the Australian uses forty terms of relationship, his ancestors must have used eighty, even though the Fijian at the same time is using twenty others. On the contrary, we have seen reasons for believing that the mind of a naked savage (much more than that of his highly civilised brother) is far more likely to refine than to simplify the distinctions committed to his care.

The truth is that there are practically no limits to the length which the mind will follow what has been ingeniously called "the bias of happy impulse." The mother of this intellectual process of refinement is interest. The richness of certain sections of a savage's vocabulary, and the mental power which preserves the minutest details about his neighbour's family or the most elaborate portions of some weird ceremony, are no more surprising, in reality, than the whist-memory of a confirmed card-player or the cricket-memory of a young athlete. Interest does for the mind what long practice and concentration do for the muscles. We may wonder at the ignorance of the savage who knows nothing of planting or cooking; but long

years in the bush have taught him to climb trees, to hurl boomerangs, to find insects, and to imitate the calls of animals, with a precision and rapidity which makes us gasp. All analogy suggests that, as Eduard Meyer asserts, the family grew up within the primary form of human society, corresponding to the animal herd. Its development was made possible by the tribe or state, and it repaid its debt by making the state in time far more compact than would otherwise have been possible.

VII. But some will ask, Why assume evolution in the family institution at all? Why should there not have been degeneration? Cannot we suppose that man and woman were bidden at the first to cleave to one another as "one flesh," and that only in the lapse of ages was this command forgotten or neglected? To this view all reverent students of the Bible would seem at first sight to be committed. But there are two ways of understanding the second chapter of Genesis. We may take it as the account of an actual episode in the life of the first human pair, or we may regard it as stating the ideal laws of union between the sexes. To those who prefer the former, it will probably be no answer to say that biologists and anthropologists are still in doubt as to whether the human race sprang from a single pair or from several pairs; but they must remember that, for the reasons suggested by the succeeding chapters of Genesis, those accounts were not intended to save us the trouble of studying antiquity for ourselves; otherwise we might have expected a closer harmony with the actual results of science, as well as rather more detail in the Biblical accounts. As a matter of fact, even if the second chapter of Genesis, in

its account of what was evidently the purpose of the Creator, is describing the actual beginning of things, it is also describing the end and completion of history in its statement of the actual union between man and wife. The lofty ideal of verse 24 has never been attained in any human society; the best that we can say for our own age is that we hope that we are on the way to it.[1]

We may hold to the hypothesis of degeneration when the existing state of things cannot well be explained without it. But how could a family like that of the best Hebrew or modern type, where the bond between husband and wife, parents and children, is so intimate that all other relationships stand together, in contrast, on one inferior plane, give birth to the complex nubile groups of the Todas or the Sioux? Either these came into existence equipped with all their strange perversities, which is unthinkable, or they evolved from earlier conditions when certain definite social restrictions were placed on individual impulse and choice, and accepted and obeyed unhesitatingly.

VIII. Now if we assume this primitive sense, we can see at once how all the conditions of savage life would develop it in the most various directions.

[1] It may here be noted that an allusion has sometimes been found in this passage to the practice of the "beena" marriage already referred to (see p. 66), whereby the bridegroom leaves his father's house and joins that of his wife; the story of Jacob with Laban (Gen. xxix.) has also been cited as an example of the practice. See also Gen. xxiv. 5; Jud. xiv. 10. But the language and the whole type of feeling, both of Gen. ii. and of the other Hebrew narratives, are against such an interpretation. When Jacob did marry, he took his wives away from their father's house as soon as he could into his own land. Nothing can well be concluded from those narratives save that the Hebrew writers knew of the custom, but regarded it as something foreign to their own ideas. The author of Gen. ii. cannot have intended to represent this form of marriage, practically non-existent in Israel, as of permanent obligation; and if this is true, what ground is there for suspecting an allusion to such a custom in the passage at all?

When female infanticide and early hardships had reduced the number of women in his tribe or camp, the man would naturally be driven to take a wife by force or fraud ; and such a proceeding might come to be considered the only worthy and honourable fashion of finding a bride. Where more settled life had given to woman a definite economic and industrial value of her own, and had made piratical conduct of this kind unpopular, the would-be husband, or his parents, would be obliged to open commercial negotiations with the possessors of the desirable commodity of which he was in search. Again, the nomad group, with no practical concerns except the procuring of sustenance and an occasional feud, would find plenty of leisure round the camp fire for a subject that always exerts a strange fascination. The human mind, and not least the mind of the savage, has a striking power of classifying, as of refining, where it is interested, and in the elaboration which always attends the process of settling what is and what is not in accordance with custom, the complexity even of the most intricate marriage systems may be reached.

In such an age, too, women are as important as men in the perennial occupation of hunting for food ; and they have not yet sunk to the position of being mere chattels. Sometimes, as in the case of one large Australian tribe (if we are rightly informed), the woman alone is considered to be physically responsible for the birth of the child ; often, in spite of the existence of the marriage groups, or perhaps because of them, the actual fatherhood of a child would be dubious. The physical bond is undeniably stronger between child and mother than between child and father. These elements

in the social experience of the tribe would naturally lead to a matriarchal rather than a patriarchal reckoning of descent, and where, in the loosely organised camp, the patriarchal family had not yet appeared, it would be natural for the wife to look to her blood-relations, her father and brothers, for the protection that might be needed by herself and her children, rather than to her husband.[1]

Further, if custom or necessity meant that wives could only be procured in a certain way, by capture from outside the tribe, or by purchase, or from certain definite groups within the tribe, the original sense of restriction would easily crown the tribal habit with a kind of sanctity. The act which we never witness soon becomes an act from the very thought of whose open performance we shrink in horror. And the savage has other reasons for superstitious dread and fear. He is surrounded by spirits. He walks in the midst of dangers. His ancestors may revisit him in dreams or in the weird silence of the forest or the plains. He is accustomed to witnessing the inspired ravings of the medicine man or the witch-doctor. He wears amulets on his person or hangs fetiches above the entrance of his hut. He must obey all manner of rules whose reason he does not know, but whose violation will be followed by terrible penalties.[2] What wonder

[1] It has been urged by Grosse (*op. cit.*) that paternal and maternal descent have developed in different societies independently of each other, and that both are original; Starcke, in "The Primitive Family," even holds that the former preceded the latter. We can only reply that both facts and probabilities point in the other direction.

[2] See, *e.g.*, Warneck, J., "Living Forces of the Gospel," part i.; Frazer, *op. cit.*, ch. iv.; Grubb., W. B., "An Unknown People in an Unknown Land," pp. 160 ff. (the Lenguas of Paraguay). Hodgson, T. C. ("The Nagas of Manipur"), describes the state of nervous tension a temporary abstention or ban ("genna") may arouse in a whole community. See, however, footnote on p. 55.

if the marvellous experiences of sexual desire should fill him with awe and terror as well as with longing,[1] and that the rules in whose presence he has grown up, and which he finds observed universally and unquestioningly, should assume in his eyes all the holiness of religion, so that their neglect would be expected to bring down all the vengeance of heaven upon himself and his tribe? It has often been pointed out that whatever interest the gods are supposed to take in the affairs of men, sexual offences are always held to be the special object of their wrath.[2]

Can we go a step further and assert that primitive man was monogamous? On this point, all direct evidence is obviously lacking, and it is hazardous to proceed into the unknown without such a guide. This much, however, may be said; that a great many tribes quite low in the scale of civilisation are monogamists;[3] that many of the special circumstances which make polygamy desirable or possible —considerable wealth, desire for many children, the social importance resulting from being the head of a large household—would naturally be rare in the earliest period of human history; that polygamy is only practised by a few members of those societies which allow it; that polyandry—the sharing of one wife among several husbands—is only found where for special reasons there is a serious lack of women, and only seldom even there; and that,

[1] See Crawley, E., "The Mystic Rose," part i.

[2] Frazer derives the whole system of marriage regulations, as he derives the whole of early man's religion, from magic. It may readily be admitted that magic has always played a large part in the life of the savage; but, at best, it is easier to find in magic an instrument for the development of such ideas, when they already exist, than for their origin. The place of magic in reference to religion is discussed in ch. 10. p. 7.

[3] See Westermarck, "Human Morals," vol. ii. pp. 398 ff.

as races advance, monogamy almost universally becomes the general rule. It must also be remembered that the number of births in any human (or animal) community is almost equally divided between the sexes. Bearing all this in mind, there is much to be said for the contention of Howard,[1] with which Westermarck and Starcke substantially agree, that with earliest man, monogamy was instinctive and primary; that it was, however, based on no consciously accepted rules or sanctions; hence, it proved unstable, and has constantly given way to polygamy. But polygamy itself is not a stable form of marriage; and though it may last for centuries, and though the change from polygamy to monogamy (as is found on the mission field) may involve great difficulty and hardship, monogamy tends to reassert itself, with increasing power and confidence, as the mature and final form of marriage in the evolution of the human race.

We can thus trace the family from the dim beginnings of the sense of sexual restraint at the dawn of human life to the matriarchate observable in every part of the uncivilised world. We can see how every circumstance of the life of the savage will influence the form which that restriction may take, while the essence of it remains fixed. *Plus ça change, plus c'est le même chose.* We can see, further, how the matriarchate passes, with enlarged command over the resources of life, into the patriarchate. Here, socially and economically, the position of the woman may rise or fall; it may be as high as in ancient Israel, or as low as in Turkey a generation ago; the various groups, and the distinction between exogamy and endogamy, may

[1] "Matrimonial Institutions," vol. i. ch. i.

disappear altogether ; the restraints, that is to say, will be much fewer ; the duties may be much more numerous. As the man's life opens out, woman may become a partner with him in a fashion which could never enter into the mind of the savage ; or she may be degraded into the mere slave of his appetites or the necessary means for the perpetuation of his race.

Where this last is the case, however, an inevitable nemesis descends on the state or class which allows it. For it prevents the discharge of the other great function of the family. Equally important with the regulation of desire and the ordering of the physical life of the sexes is the inculcation and organisation of mutual service. Where this is forgotten, family life inevitably decays, and the whole tone and vigour and effectiveness of society decays with it. This latter function develops more slowly in the history of mankind than the former. We have as yet paid little attention to it. We shall have to consider it more carefully in succeeding pages. But its importance cannot be overestimated. And its presence, though in the germ, from the very beginning, shows that the significance of the family for the history of the race is not only social and economic, but moral. The permanence, however shortlived, necessary to all marriage relations, means that the husband is bound to care for the needs of the wife while the wife is bearing and feeding the husband's child. The mating of the sexes has actually meant a sharing of the duties of the household and generally of the chase, the field, and the farm.

Aristotle has said, with his usual acuteness, that the household is the first human partnership.

And every partnership is a school of morals. For no member of the company is his own master. Each must live in relation to his partners. Discipline is as essential for a party of Masai braves on the war-path as for the crew of an iron-clad steaming into action. It is exercised in the forests of South America and the jungles of Central Ceylon as effectively as in the warehouses or suburbs of an English city—perhaps far more effectively, on the average, than in the tenements of an English slum.

Before passing to the consideration of the appearance of morality in primitive society, however, we may claim to have justified this long examination of the origins of the family. We have been led to a point where the family, as most of us are familiar with it, is barely recognisable—a point behind which we cannot push our way. But we have found, at the very starting-point of the development of our race, the essential characteristic of the institution we know—the existence of certain social and moral ties:

> "Unwritten laws, eternal in the heavens;
> Not of to-day or yesterday are these,
> But live from everlasting, and from whence
> They sprang, none knoweth." [1]

If we cannot feel that these ties of themselves constitute family life, we can see how they contain its principle, and from them we can retrace, step by step, the long journey. First comes the tribe, with its various classes and their intricate relations to each other: the reckoning of descent predominantly through the mother, while the groups, meeting and separating again, live as nomads by the chase. Then follows the growth, within the tribe, of the

[1] Sophocles, "Antigone." (Whitelaw's translation.)

solidifying family, larger or smaller, as life becomes more stable and homes are more settled and agriculture replaces hunting. This leads on to the subordination of the women in the new patriarchal regime, the appearance of large joint families, the development of ancestor worship, the delimitation and organisation of civic functions between family, clan, and body politic in the city states, and the rise of the small independent family under modern industrial conditions. Throughout, a cohesive force has been at work ; both its intension and its extension have varied with varying circumstances and modes of life ; but on its existence has depended the welfare and the progress of the human race.

CHAPTER IV

THE RISE OF MORALS

I. Our search for the origin of the family has thus led us beyond both the family and the State, but not beyond the tribe. Nowhere do we find human beings who have not reached the tribal state of society. A being like the terrible Grendel, living apart from his fellows, exists only in the imagination of the poets, and the author of Beowulf himself feels such a creature to be a monster. Further, not only do we find the tribe when we find the man, but the mere fact of the restrictions of which we have spoken shows that the tribe itself was organised. It was never a mere pack. A horde it may have been, but not a herd.[1] In that far-off age, men were more than animals. Doubtless, like other gregarious species, they lived together, because it never occurred to them to do anything else, and because, otherwise, they would soon have been harried off the face of the earth. But this kind of life meant that laws of some kind were both recognised and obeyed.

If this is true, it carries with it a very far-reaching consideration. In watching the beginnings of

[1] It is usual to make a distinction between clan and tribe. Our argument, however, does not involve this. The distinction is not an easy one at best, the main difference being that what is called a clan, in opposition to a tribe, is relatively smaller and exhibits a larger amount of actual kinship. Its real importance consists in the fact, noticed above, that because of the clans, the tribe is not homogeneous, but organised.

society we are watching the beginnings of morals. For morals, like the family, must begin somewhere. Conduct, like the family, has a history. It is true that this has not always been acknowledged. Moral philosophers have often been content to analyse the morals, or what they felt to be the most important part of the morals, of their own time, or the conduct which they most admired. Such analyses have given us the great systems of Butler, Hartley, Shaftesbury and even Kant and John Stuart Mill. Nor could the study of ethics ever have dispensed with these analyses. For in conduct, as in the human body, what is once discovered to be in existence has always been in existence, at least in embryo. If Butler found conscience and self-love both regulating passion in the eighteenth century, it was because they had done so from the time when first there were human passions to regulate. If Hartley found the root of ethics in the principle of association, it was because the mind has associated certain things together as long as it has been a mind at all. If Kant deduced all the laws of conduct, and all the certainties of practical life, from the "categorical imperative," it was because from the beginning of human life people have felt that they must do certain things "because they must."

All this, however, sends us back to the earliest stages of human society. Each generation is bound to the generation preceding it by indissoluble ties. What we are now, our ancestors were, or were preparing to become. The doctrine of evolution has made it impossible for us to forget this. Every theory of man's social or moral nature must be tested by what we know of the history of his society

and his morals. In this study, the researches that have been recently made are far more abundant than ever before, though the actual materials, as we have seen, are steadily disappearing. All these researches emphasise the difference between the most primitive man to whom we can go back and ourselves; that difference is far wider than the difference between East and West as they exist to-day. But, in addition, they emphasise the extraordinary likeness between the various representatives of primitive man, however wide-spread their geographical distribution. Here, at all events, Spencer's formula appears to hold good, that the heterogeneous develops from the homogeneous. Not only the family and sexual arrangements, noticed in the last chapter: the fairy tales, the religious ideas, the respective duties assigned to man and woman, the notions about the rearing of children—all these suggest some mysterious means for the interchange of ideas in the earliest age; and it is well known that the dolmens scattered all over the world seem to have been heaped by the same muscular arms, and the flint arrow heads picked up from every primeval rubbish heap from Kamskatka to the Nile might have been chipped in the same rude workshop.

We must therefore leave our familiar surroundings behind and place ourselves in a savage community, in the hope that by some good fortune we may be able to watch the beginnings of our human system of morals there. We are already familiar with the curious and diverse rules which the savage must obey in matters of sexual selection. He is equally bound down in countless daily acts and habits. Doubtless, a very large part of his

time is taken up with the supply of his mere animal needs. But in the way in which he supplied those animal needs he is vastly different from the animals. Food is not only procured in company with others; it is shared. To every man, certain articles of food are absolutely forbidden. Sleep is not to be taken wherever the desire for it may seize a man; he must sleep in certain places, and with certain other individuals of the tribe. He may not eat with whom he pleases, but only with certain persons, sometimes quite strange to him. Often, eating with his wife is strictly forbidden. Sometimes he must have nothing to do with his wife, except at certain times; at all times he must have nothing to do with certain others among her relations or his own; the restriction from speaking to his wife's mother, or even looking at her, being specially common.[1] Wrongs done to certain fellow-tribesmen he is bound to avenge; for wrongs done to certain others he must consider himself jointly responsible.[2]

He is also acutely conscious of his membership within the tribe. He venerates the chiefs—when he is advanced enough to have any—almost as if they were gods in human form and flesh. For him, their orders are armed with a personal authority which needs the aid of no threats of fine or punishment for disobedience. His conception of property is, to say the least, very undeveloped. Some few articles, indeed, are his own; his weapons, his

[1] For a typical example, see M'Clintock, W., *op. cit.* Among the Blackfeet, if a man has appeared unintentionally before his wife's mother, he must present her with a horse, as amends for the outrage. With his father-in-law, he will generally be on quite intimate terms.

[2] For example, a boy falls from a tree on his companion and kills him; the dead boy's brother is accordingly bidden to kill the unlucky youth by climbing the tree and falling therefrom upon him; Parkyns, "Life in Abyssinia," ii. 236, quoted in Westermarck, *op. cit.*, i. 219.

tools, his amulets, and his hut. The land over which he roams or hunts belongs to no man, or else to the whole tribe; as agriculture slowly develops, it is the crops he raises out of the land previously allotted to him, and not the land itself, that he will claim as his own; or if he lays claim to any plot of land, it will be land which he has personally cleared. Side by side with loyalty to chief or tribe is often found some minor loyalty—to totem group or secret society[1]—which may either assist or hinder true "clannableness."

Moreover, all round him is flung the supernatural. In the first place, the very restrictions by which he is surrounded are based on the semi-religious terrors of "taboo." Taboo is simply to be understood as a prohibition, the infraction of which is followed by supernaturally inflicted penalties and can never be thought of without terror. In both Africa and Australia, for example, the "bull-roarer" is an instrument strictly appropriated to certain religious ceremonies for males alone. No woman must even set eyes on it. It is said that native Christian women will shrink in horror even if a missionary offers to show them the harmless toy. Secondly, a mysterious and incalculable influence (called, for instance, by the Polynesians *mana*, and by some North American Indian tribes

[1] See Webster, "Primitive Secret Societies." These societies or clubs are found in savage communities all over the world. They are generally quite independent of blood relationships. Probably they spring, in part, from a child-like love of secret understandings and pass-words. They have developed in widely different directions. But all exist for the mutual benefit of their members, whether in trade, religion, social life, or even robbery and lawlessness. They afford ample opportunities for the intimidation exerted alike by the policeman and the bandit. Sometimes they embrace a few initiates, sometimes a whole age or sex, and, in nearly all, magical terrors exerted over outsiders play a large part in their activities.

orunda),[1] powerful, like his own chiefs, both for good and evil, resides in many of the objects around him. By appropriate action he may harness this power, as his descendant has harnessed the wind and the lightning, to his own purposes, or, like the sudden and devastating earthquake and hurricane, it may leap out upon him to his ruin. Indeed, since no distinction is made, in the infancy of human thought, between living and lifeless, the categories of animal, vegetable and mineral have no meaning. Everything is alive. Animals, birds and reptiles, trees and rocks and stones, must be kept in good humour or avoided, as if they were human beings, and with the more heed, as their action can be less easily foreseen.

Lastly, he carries about a perpetual mystery in his own body. The blood, which spurts up in such an uncanny fashion whenever he is wounded, the powerful impulses which overmaster his whole being at certain times, the abiding marvel of sleep and the dreams which it brings, the cataclysm of birth and the weird horror of death, make him a wonder to himself. An even greater wonder to him is sex. Whatever women may have thought of men, men have ever looked upon women as beings from whom they could never keep apart (every boy has a mother, and most boys have sisters), yet who could be approached only at considerable risk. The savage man knows very well what a woman cannot and must not do; he trembles when he thinks of the innate power by which she can cast some unexplored spell over his mind or his body.[2]

[1] See Marrett, R. R., "Threshold of Religion."

[2] See Crawley, E., "The Mystic Rose," p. 182, and, for taboos on women which are inspired by fear of their influence, p. 36. In early societies the witch is often feared more than the wizard; and the witch has lived on,

This is not, of course, to suggest that he fears the thought of touching a woman, any more than he fears the thought of touching his own body; but none the less, to the normal savage, a member of the other sex is sufficiently removed from him to inspire a dread which, even if it is dulled or forgotten by long usage, leaves its traces in many a taboo and ceremonial regulation.

II. Here, then, is the field in which we must find the answer to our question, How shall we describe the birth of morals? The savage, like ourselves, does certain things; other things he avoids. Is this because, like ourselves, he feels that in some cases an obligation of duty is laid upon him? If so, what is the nature of this obligation? Does it attach itself to some acts and not to others? If so, why to these and not to those?

Until recent times, the study—or perhaps we ought to say, the attempt at a reconstruction—of primitive conditions of life has mainly interested philosophers of the Epicurean or hedonistic type. Hobbes was simply developing the tendency of the Epicureans whose work he took up when he bade us seek the origin of our ideas of right and wrong in the primeval forest. The master-desire of man, he claimed, is and always has been for power. The attempts, however, made by all men to gratify this desire lead to very disagreeable consequences—a life of incessant turmoil, insecurity and violence. The power for which all wish, none can obtain. It remains, then, to acquire the next best thing, security in what actually is possessed; and this Hobbes imagines to have been done by the agree-

even in Europe, in popular fears, long after the wizard has been completely forgotten.

ment to constitute and obey some sovereign authority by whose firm hand the wayward passions of his subjects should be restrained, and who, by taking from them the whole of their liberty, should restore to them a part. What that authority allows to be done is thus right ; what he forbids and punishes is wrong. Obviously, we cannot take Hobbes' account literally as an actual chapter in the history of the race ; we do not know whether Hobbes ever intended that it should be so taken. All the same, it embodies an insight into the tendencies of human nature which to many people will seem unpleasantly shrewd.

Spencer's view is more attractive. A certain amount of altruism (*e.g.* mother-love) is necessary for the preservation of the race ; hence, it will be perpetuated. Further, more elaborate altruism (*e.g.* clan feeling or public spirit) will be of great service in the inter-tribal struggle for existence ; it will therefore be enforced, at any rate in the tribes which survive. Hence, out of egoism, or the desire to preserve one's own life and to supply one's own wants (which is of course the " natural " attitude of mankind), or in spite of egoism, altruism will emerge, and, with altruism, morality in general. And this process, Spencer hopes, will go on until " on the one hand, by continual repression of aggressive instincts and the exercise of feelings which minister to public welfare, and on the other, by the lapse of restraints gradually becoming less necessary, there must be produced a kind of man, so constituted that while fulfilling his own desires, he fulfils also the social needs. The ultimate man will be one whose private interests coincide with public ones. He will be that manner of man, who, while spon-

taneously fulfilling his own nature, incidentally performs the functions of a social unit, and yet is only able to fulfil his own nature by all others doing the same." [1]

Each of these views has a special importance for our purpose, and the consideration of them will relieve us from the necessity of discussing a good many later theories. The contentions of Hobbes cannot be passed over, first, because, as most people will admit, he is "so true to human nature"; and secondly, because, if he is right, there must be something very wrong with the history of the family sketched out in the previous chapter. Herbert Spencer is of equal importance, because the opposition between egoism and altruism with which he begins underlies most of the modern speculations as to the rise of ethics; and the reconciliation with which he ends is, to say the least, quite as satisfactory as the views of some of his followers. Huxley, for instance, urged that the evolution of the human race has proceeded by egoism alone, and that altruism, which he identifies with ethics, is a step in an entirely contrary direction; [2] while to Benjamin Kidd, egoism is the plain teaching of reason, and altruism a revolt against reason at the bidding of a deeper and slowly emerging instinct.[3]

What shall we say then to Hobbes? The two main elements in his theory are the innate and pre-moral desire of the individual for power; and the mutual arrangement, source alike of the rules of morality and the institution of property, by which

[1] See Spencer, H., "Social Statics" (revised edition 1892), pp. 35-44.

[2] See his "Evolution and Ethics." "Let us understand once for all that this ethical progress of society depends not on imitating the cosmic process, still less in running away from it, but in combating it."

[3] "Social Evolution," pp. 59 ff.

that desire is restricted to range within certain relatively narrow limits. With regard to the former, we can only say that Hobbes carries into primitive times human nature as he has known or interpreted it in the seventeenth century after Christ. Primitive man does not desire power in Hobbes' sense; he desires food and drink and certain other physical necessities; he searches for these in common with his companions; and, equally in common with them, denies himself of them in a large number of what seem to us perfectly harmless cases. He is surrounded by a host of foes—to our thinking, the larger number of them quite imaginary; and these foes he does not fear simply for himself, but for his tribe. Doubtless, he is not averse to power when the chance of acquiring it is offered; and as his society develops and grows less homogeneous, his chiefs and priests will acquire a great deal of it; but to say that desire for it is fundamental with him is like saying that a hungry man desires power when he longs to see a plate of roast beef before him with a knife and fork at his side. The savage may further grow very angry, like other people, if what he thinks or wishes to be his share of these good things is taken from him, and quite ready to retaliate. He may also set his heart on some desirable object, and pursue it for himself; but this needs both imagination and initiative; these, however, are not highly developed in the savage. As a matter of fact, the range of such individual desires is, for the most part, strictly limited, and, when a private desire is followed up, resort is often had to the dubious assistance of magic.

Secondly, it must be admitted that nothing approaching a contract is observable in primitive

life. Everything is a matter of status. The savage himself believes that his customs go back to an antiquity beyond which there is no searching, or that they were ordered by the far-off progenitors of his race. Further, we can trace in numerous instances the actual rise of the potentate or sovereign. This may be due to success as a war-leader, personal influence, or uncanny psychical powers ; it is never due to the formal act of an assembly. Hobbes' suggestion was a prophecy of 1689 rather than a history of the far-distant past. Again, customs may be modified or altered or adapted to new circumstances ; but this is arranged by the old men of the tribe, or some recognised authority, and forthwith accepted by everyone. The important point, however, is that long before a clan or tribal chieftain has any wide influence, or indeed can be said to exist, these customs and restrictions are all at work and accepted and obeyed ; and that when the chieftain comes into power, these are the last things which he thinks of modifying. If he did meddle with them, he would rouse all the opposition which Ahab encountered when he set his heart on the patrimony of one of his subjects.

III. Can we find more help in Spencer's theory, that egoism and altruism have pulled one against the other, till they discovered a way of pulling together ? It is not altogether easy to decide whether this discovery is regarded as having been made by the race in the long course of its history, or by each individual or society. Long before Spencer's " Data of Ethics," indeed, students of the subject had developed what is now called altruism from egoism ; and it needs no great acuteness to see the necessity of giving a *quid pro quo* in

human affairs. But if our account of primitive society is correct, the problem of the rise of morals is to be solved in a different fashion. Primitive man is neither an egoist nor an altruist.[1] What the tribe needs of him, that he does, without a murmur or a complaint. But he does not consciously deny himself. He does not say, "I would rather do this, but my conscience or my duty to others, or to the moral law, demands that I should do that." In fact, we can hardly talk about his morals at all. He is simply a member of a larger whole. The gulf between "myself" and "others" does not exist; just as it hardly exists for the very young child, and ceases to exist for devoted friends and lovers.

Now evolution can hardly explain the rise of this pre-moral attitude from any hypothesis of chance variations; any more than evolution, by that simple means, can explain the rise of the determination to restrict certain impulses which has given birth to the different family systems. But this inability need not disappoint us; for, wherever a human being exists society exists; and wherever society exists, this attitude of restriction must necessarily be found within it. How else would society be possible? For society is not a mere matter of addition. It is an organism; a system of individuals; and these are not only like one another in various important characteristics; but also, in however limited a fashion, they live inside one another; they think the same thoughts, they are animated by the same desires and loves, fears and hates, just like the members of any really united family in Birmingham or Chicago. A

[1] "Egoism is at once something too deliberate and too limited to be primitive," Hobhouse, L. T., "Morals in Evolution," vol. ii. p. 259.

primitive society, indeed, is one great family; because that fellow-feeling, that kindness (to use the word in its true sense, as meaning the natural feeling to one another of those who are akin) which is the mark of all true family life, is also, in however primitive a fashion, the mark of the earliest society.

However, if evolution cannot explain this attitude, but must take it as a datum, she can easily prove its worth in the struggle for existence. It is not the condition of progress; it is the condition of existence itself. A collection of human beings without these feelings could not remain a collection of human beings at all; and with the slender equipment of savage life, in tools, weapons, and knowledge, the chances of life for a solitary individual would be small indeed. The human race, if it had been obliged to acquire altruism, would inevitably have perished before the lesson were half learnt. A fully developed individual consciousness would have been a fatal gift to mankind. But, granted that the clan-consciousness came first, we can see at once that the more this consciousness was developed, the better chances its possessors would enjoy. The more completely men and women learnt to act together, and dig and fish and hunt and fight and form connexions with one another, as the common feeling might direct, so much the larger would be their stores of food, and so much the greater would be the probability of their being able to protect themselves from foes, both animals and men. On the other hand, the dangers arising from the indulgence of natural but fierce bodily desires would be greatly lessened. Entire selfishness would have destroyed such co-operation; it would have destroyed restrictions on desire and

passion ; it would have been as destructive as the sudden appearance of a band of European sailors or traders in a hitherto unknown island.

IV. Are we then to suppose that self-regarding desires and actions are simply a product of later advance ? This would indeed be to postulate a golden age for antiquity. And if so, how would such desires arise at all ? If they would have been fatal at the earliest stage of life, would they not have been fatal later on also ? Would they not have wiped out any community which had the temerity to permit their appearance ? In answer to this very natural question, it must be remembered that evolution means progressive differentiation. Even at the beginning of things, the savage has his own personal needs to supply ; his flint spear, his digging stick, his boomerang, belong to him ; and he is very conscious of individual preference, short-lived as it may be, but strong. In many cases, the possession of weapons or tools and the satisfaction of private wants will not interfere at all with the general obedience to what is required by the common life. But it is easy to see that sooner or later the clash will come. He must choose between doing what he wants and what others expect and demand. That is to say, he must choose between continuing to be a member of the tribe, or being, for the time, someone else, an isolated individual who acknowledges only the law of his own passions. The same thing may be observed in the nursery. The child has to choose between going his own way, and complying with the laws of the household universe in which he is placed.

It is not the case, however, as is often supposed, that punishment alone restores the " social mind "

to its rightful authority, either in the child or the savage. Attacked by the individual self, the social self rises in its own defence, and protests against the innovating act of selfishness. Unpleasant consequences from outside naturally have their weight; but these would be comparatively weak if they had not an ally within the mind of the actor. As a matter of fact, the expectation of punishment has always been an uncertain and capricious deterrent from wrong-doing. The true preservative of human society is not dislike of consequences, but dislike of the wrong act itself. Right conduct is performed, because it is preferred.

But, it may be asked, does this account represent the actual course of development? Did the mind of the early man decide that certain things were to be done because he preferred them, or because he approved them? The distinction is an important one; and at first sight it might appear that nothing but the second alternative could provide a satisfactory basis for morals. Surely, morality is a matter of judgment, and judgment is a matter of approbation. Thus, Dr F. H. Bradley, in discussing the nature of goodness, says, "the good is co-extensive with approbation." He adds that "approbation is to be taken in its widest sense. To approve is to have an idea in which we feel satisfaction, and to have or imagine the presence of this idea in existence. And against the existence which, actually or in imagination, fails to realise the idea, the idea becomes an 'is to be,' a 'should,' or an 'ought.'"[1] Similarly, Westermarck begins his long investigation into the origin and development of moral ideas by pointing out that "the

[1] "Appearance and Reality," pp. 407, 8.

moral concepts are generalisations of tendencies in certain phenomena to call forth moral emotions," and that these moral emotions are of two kinds, disapproval, passing at times into indignation, and approval.[1] This disapproval, or approval, is itself moral; that is to say, it is marked by disinterestedness and apparent impartiality, and it has "a certain flavour of generality."[2]

These contentions are enforced with a great wealth of illustration marshalled with the utmost skill; all of them show conclusively that certain actions of individuals, of the most diverse nature, are resented by the community, and that their results are feared and dreaded. These acts come to be regarded as wrong; while, on the other hand, those acts which are followed by retributive kindly emotions come to be regarded as right.

But this does not really answer our question. That there must be approbation and disapprobation in every stage of moral development, and indeed wherever human beings live together in any form of society, is self-evident. But what are the objects of each, and why is this act selected for approval and that for disapproval? Here we reach the centre of the problem. The readiest answer naturally is, Everything will be disapproved whose consequences are held, rightly or wrongly, to be injurious to others—either the act of homicide which destroys the life of a fellow-tribesman outright, or the sexual irregularity which is held to bring pestilence and famine on the tribal land. And as most actions to which a man would be led, when left to himself, are likely to be hurtful to others in the mysterious world in which the savage dwells, the category of

[1] Westermarck, *op. cit.*, vol. i. pp. 4, 21. [2] *Op. cit.*, pp. 101 ff.

evil acts will soon become sufficiently wide to answer to actual historical judgments.

This, however, is really to return to the abandoned territory of a primitive egoism. "You have your own individual desires; it is our business to see that you do not carry them out to the detriment of the rest of us." And even if we felt obliged for other reasons to re-enter that abandoned territory, we should have this further difficulty, that even if the theory gives us some account of disapprobation, it can tell us next to nothing of approbation. Westermarck himself gives almost all his attention to disapprobation. And yet "right" is just as real a conception as "wrong." Indeed, a moment's thought will carry us a step further. The moral consciousness is not split into two; "this is right"; "this is wrong." It is one. In its beginnings, it contemplates a certain ideal of conduct, adherence to which is recognised as right, just as its defiance is recognised as wrong. If there is any temporal priority involved in the existence of these two judgments, right must come before wrong, and not wrong before right.

It may be noticed at this point that the theory of magic as the basis of the various restrictions recognised by the savage, and therefore, presumably as the basis of the morality that has been evolved therefrom, carries us no further. This theory asserts that certain acts are performed or avoided, not because they are in themselves pleasant or unpleasant, but in view of certain results outside the direct action of human powers, *e.g.* special good fortune in hunting, or the outbreak of some terrible disease. Or again, the stranger will be received hospitably, lest, when driven away, he should

pronounce a curse or weave a spell.[1] This is quite possible. But it does not go to the root of the matter. The results in question are regarded either as happening to the individual or the tribe. If the former, we are once more facing the egoistic theory, namely, that a man's acts or abstinences are prompted merely by prudential considerations as to his own happiness. If the latter, the tribal feeling is pre-supposed. The belief in magic is simply an application of what has universally been regarded as axiomatic, that actions will have their consequences, and that if we desire the ends, we must take the means.[2]

Again, this ideal of right is present to the agent as well as to the spectator or sufferer. Whatever may have been the developed and calculating selfishness of later days, of a Machiavelli or a Paley, right, to the primitive clansman, is more than something which his fellows will allow him to do, and wrong is more than something for which they will punish him or his kindred if they catch him in the act. Good acts are not always performed, nor evil acts avoided, unwillingly. Does a mother suckle her child and a warrior rush with his comrades into battle because they know that to refuse would cause unpleasant treatment from other people? Does the savage avoid incest or disobedience to his chief because, much as he would enjoy these acts, the probable penalties are too serious to be risked? That is to reduce morality, in its beginnings, to a gamble.

[1] *Cf.* Frazer, J. G., "Psyche's Task"; Westermarck, though not in agreement with Frazer, gives further illustrations in "Sociological Papers," 1905, pp. 146 ff.

[2] On savage magic and its pre-suppositions, see Spencer, B., and Gillen, F. J., "Native Tribes of Central Australia," ch. 16; also Skeat, W. W., and Blagden, O., "Pagan Races of the Malay Peninsular," i. 340, 455, ii. 113, 148.

Let it be granted at once that the thought of the penalties exists and is by no means inoperative. Even the saint, tempted to embezzlement or outrage, may not forget that he will probably find himself in the dock if he yields. But is that the sole reason for his resistance? The act is as hateful to him as to his suggested victim. To most mothers, the horror of maternal neglect, if it were seriously contemplated, would be not less acute than the suffering which such neglect would bring to the child. And if there were not this love of what is felt to be the right act in the mind of the savage, and horror of the wrong one, could the idea of right and wrong ever have been developed? Unless the very basis of evolution is an error, the fact that these ideas exist to-day shows that they must have existed, in some elementary form at least, from the first. The moral condemnation of an act, the shrinking from the thought of its performance, the loss of self-respect and satisfaction when it has been carried out, cannot be derived from other people's disapproval of its consequences by the simple procedure of calling that disapproval disinterested and general. Such a state of things, if it were actual, would simply result in accentuating the difference between my wishes and those of others, and making me more resolved on securing my own happiness, where this could be done with impunity, than before.

V. But we have already seen that the very reverse of this is the case. Far more completely than the majority of civilised men, the savage is a member of his community, his clan. But this really means that the clan lives, thinks, feels, in the individual. Isolation makes him ill at ease,

not himself. All the restrictions of which he is conscious follow directly from the organisation of the tribe. A man shares his food because the whole tribe has a claim on the food which any member produces or discovers. He shuns certain articles of food because he belongs to a section of the tribe which cannot eat them without impiety and danger. He sleeps in the club-house because all the men of similar standing in his village must do so ; he takes his wife from the group of women with which alone he can have matrimonial relations, because such is the custom of his tribe ; and he associates with others, relations or non-relations, or avoids them like foes or lepers, for the same sufficient and satisfying reason. His positive law is " be clannable " ; " do what your clan expects " ; and, except under seasons of rare temptation, or in abnormal circumstances (such as the perplexing presence of white men), he has no idea of doing anything else.[1] Unaccustomed to think for himself, except within rigidly defined limits, he grows up into his society. Its beliefs are his ; its admirations and dislikes are his also. " All the life of the untouched kaffirs is centred on the tribal organisation ; they live, not unto themselves, but to the tribe and chief. . . . Judging from innumerable instances of fidelity, self-sacrifice and even immolation, there must be fibres in the being of the nation, responding at once to the social call, which are either non-existent or are never similarly touched in the white man. At the call of the hereditary chief . . . all is thrown aside and jubilantly the tribesmen respond."[2] It is as if one spirit moved in all the individuals.[3]

[1] Compare Hobhouse, *op. cit.*, ii. 73.

[2] Evans, M. S., " Black and White in South Africa," p. 66.

[3] Giddings, F. H., " Inductive Sociology," pp. 57 ff., traces the social

We have lately been familiarised with the term "crowd psychology," and the curious fashion in which individual preferences and moral ideas are lost, or merged, in a crowd; how the whole crowd, for the time, is dominated, as it were, by a single personality. In the early tribe, the action of that one spirit is permanent. Its decisions are more influential than those of chief or priest. It is not indeed universal. It does not mean that selfishness, anger, deceit, revenge are unknown. All these exist, and doubtless they are known even in those tribes which travellers describe as strikingly friendly, good-tempered, and cheerful. But behind all this, and underneath it, lies the impulse and sentiment of unity and co-operation. It does not occur to the savage to injure his people by any outrage against their customs, or, in many instances, even to withhold from a clansman any food that he may have discovered. Nor does it seem strange to him that when someone else has done wrong, he and everyone else in the tribe should have to suffer. Anything different would be distasteful, painful, abhorrent. From this fellowship or brotherhood —the words are not too strong—morality has taken its rise. Acts which are understood as embodying it, when habits of reflection appear, are right; acts which defy it are wrong. But the conscious approval or disapproval comes second; the sentiment comes first.

One more question must be considered before we leave this part of our discussion. Does not the foregoing account suggest that right and wrong may have a meaning for individuals but no meaning

mind to the fact, perhaps partly physical, of like response to stimulus in members of the same community or race.

at all for communities? If, for a man or woman, "be good" means "be a true member of your tribe," what does it mean for the tribe itself? That in the earliest stages it means nothing, we must frankly admit. Between tribe and tribe, there are no laws. In fact, the savage is so completely a part of his tribe, that away from it he has no duties, nor, properly speaking, any human existence. And all students of international law know how slowly even civilised nations learn to transcend this relic of barbarism. But the first steps in this journey are taken quite early. Within the tribe is the clan. Outside the tribe are other tribes with whom there is generally peace. A league or even a union of tribes will come about. The sense of duty grows at once more extensive and also more intensive. On the one hand, the family rises into prominence. On the other, the tribe becomes conscious that it is a member of a family of tribes, and inter-tribal and inter-state morality at last are born into the world.

VI. What then, it will perhaps be asked, of religion? Does not morality really depend on religion? Otto Pfleiderer holds that "religious motives lay at the basis of morals and morality from the beginning of civilisation." "Social customs are derived from religious notions."[1] "All moral commandments originally have the character of religious commands."[2] But the problem is perhaps a simpler one. Those who would describe the primitive mind must beware of crediting it with the possession of clear-cut distinctions. To us, morals and religion may be entirely distinct. It

[1] See his "Philosophy and Development of Religion," i. pp. 38 ff. "The family is the oldest religious community."

[2] Wundt, "Ethik," p. 99. For a fuller consideration of religion in its earlier stages, see pp. 302 ff.

does not at all follow that they are distinct to the savage. We make an equally clear distinction between religion and science. The truth would rather seem to be that to the savage, religion and science are not yet differentiated, either from morals, or from one another. An amusing story is told of a native of the West Coast of Africa who was watching a missionary fixing a lightning conductor to the roof of his dwelling. "Why are you doing that?" "To keep off the lightning," was the reply. "Oh, I see; you put your fetish on your house; I wear mine," pointing to his necklace of beads and bones, "on my chest." The fetish was at once the symbol of divine protection, magical ingenuity, and "scientific" reliance on observed uniformities of cause and effect. But the savage sees no reason why these should be separated. In the world of surprises and marvels in which he lives, he will make the most varied attempts to unravel the tangled skein of the universe as it presents itself to him; he will have impartial recourse to the fetish and the charm, the magic formula pronounced by someone specially near to the mysterious powers, the offering and the sacrifice. He is as ruthless an experimenter as the modern man of science. If one medicine-man will not help him, he will go to another; if one god does not answer his prayers, he will try another, and fling the inefficient or stupid divinity on the dung-hill.[1] If Baal will not hear us for our sacrifices and incantations, let us try knives and lancets. If we cannot conquer the Israelites on the hills, their gods must be hill gods, and we will try conclusions with them on the plains.[2]

[1] See Westermarck, *op. cit.*, vol. ii. p. 729.
[2] 1 Kings xviii. 28, xx. 23, 28; cp. Is. ii. 20.

If then religion means seeking supernatural assistance in the avoidance of present or anticipated dangers, or the acquisition of advantages and blessings, it is not easy to draw the line between religion and the first tentative steps of science. And this view of religion has often been made the reason for going further, and finding in religion the source of morality. If there are gods who take thought for the doings of men, they must have their preferences as regards human conduct. Certain acts, directed to them or to their worshippers, will gain their favour, certain others will be cursed by their disapprobation and bring down swift punishment. Hence, it is alleged, are formed the rules of conduct. Good conduct is that which is pleasing to the gods, and which, as such, will in the long run pay the individual or the tribe which practices it. Thus, with a logic worthy of some of the theologians of the eighteenth century, from Butler to Waterland and Paley, morality, as the practical side of religion, is really the fine flower of self-love, and only the ignorant could be immoral.

Such an argument, temptingly natural as it appears, really fails to do justice to both the complexity and the simplicity of primitive thought. It takes no account of the tribal feeling which dominates the savage; and it makes a distinction where the savage makes none. Religion cannot be considered the parent of morals. It appears by the side of morals; and the two travel hand in hand, like companions who will sometimes fall out with one another, but who walk in general harmony, down the course of history. Society itself is religious. Religion is woven into the web of common life. All that concerns the welfare of the community, the

tribe, is a matter for religion. The god is the lord, the head, of the community. All gods are in their origin either national or family gods. The national god stands for, and even is, the nation itself. Other beings are propitiated or feared; but these are at best spirits, commerce with whom is looked upon with suspicion by the best minds among the nation. They are not genuine gods at all. Very different are Asshur of Assyria, Marduk of Babylon, Jupiter Optimus Maxumus of Rome, Thor and Woden of our Teutonic ancestors, and also Jehovah of Israel. Very different, also, are Nyambe of Central Africa and the Great Spirit of the North American Indians.

To reverence these is not a matter either of far-sighted self-love or of the natural wish (common to followers both of magic and science) to make nature a slave instead of a tyrant. It is the expression of a devotion to the larger self, to the common need; to a being in whose eyes the interests of my comrades and associates are as important as my own, and who demands, therefore, that I must love my friends and be true to them. His will, indeed, can be nothing else than the conduct which the custom and tradition of my tribe has hallowed. Even if he were not believed in at all, that custom would still exist; disobedience would mean that I should be cut off from my people. And there are many tribes to whom the existence of a tribal god seems of distinctly minor importance compared with the sanctity attributed to tribal customs. But most of us, savage and civilised, depend a good deal upon the concrete and personal. "Humanity" or "my tribe" are somewhat vague as objects for my devotion and self-sacrifice. A man will want "the ashes of his fathers, the temples of his gods."

Morality may live for a time independently of religion, but without the services of religion she will be hard put to it to maintain her sway.

Others will ask, Is not morality connected with religion in quite a different way? It has revealed morality. Are not the commands of morality the commands of God, and the voice of conscience the voice of God? The deeper meaning of the conception of revelation lies outside our present scope. Here we can but observe that the commands of morality which have actually been recognised and respected among men are so numerous and diverse, and often, looked at from our standpoint, so useless and even revolting, that to regard them all as the direct commands of God is very difficult. On the other hand, behind all these varying commands, as we are now aware, lies an instinct, a sense of what must be, which in all its changing expressions implies both self-containment within the tribe and self-subordination to its interests and desires. To the theist, this conviction will be the primal object of revelation. Vouchsafed at no definite moment, nor to any sage or saint, it has been implanted, he will say, in the mind and heart of men, by the great Father whose offspring they are. The prophet or seer will at best receive some divine intimation that the time has come for the embodiment of that feeling to be changed, and a message that God demands a purer service from men of larger growth and deeper insight.[1]

Which, then, comes first? The question cannot be answered, because it is really unmeaning. Loyalty to my clan, obedience to the primal law of human

[1] See the careful discussion of the question in Westermarck, *op. cit.* ii. chaps. 48-52.

life, is both morality and religion. Looked at from the point of view of my clan, or group, or family, it becomes morality; looked at from the point of view of the head and representative of the continuous immortal life of that group, it is religion. "All morality, as morality was then understood, was conserved and enforced by religious motives and sanctions." [1] Neither morality nor religion stops here. We are far enough from the morals of a Pascal or a T. H. Green, of a Francis of Assisi or a St Paul; but we hold, even here, the thread which will guide us to the point where they stand. Without the long and tedious journey over the lower slopes, we should never reach the crown of the ascent; and the lower slopes gain a significance of their own, and even something of sublimity, when we know to what heights they may lead.

The paths of morality and religion have diverged widely in the history of human thought. To some minds, the two are necessarily opposed. "Religion rises above morality in this, that while the ideal of morality is only progressively realised, the ideal of religion is realised here and now." [2] Yet both the gradual and the complete realisation are possible, in their degree, for the lowest as for the highest members of the race.

The developed explains the immature, and glorifies it. The Hottentot and the Bedouin wear out an existence which seems, to the casual observer, as brutish as it is dull. But in their dumb fears and

[1] Smith, W. Robertson, "Religion of the Semites," pp. 254 ff. Mankind is divided for every individual into two groups, those to whom his life is sacred and those to whom it is not. The god is originally of the same stock with his worshippers. These two statements throw much light on the initial connexion between religion and morality.

[2] Caird, J., "Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion."

perplexing abnegations, their fierce loyalties and passionate hatreds, we can yet discern the seeds of the confident self-sacrifice of the patriot, the rapturous devotion of the saint; fettered as they are by ignorance and false reasoning, they can still love their neighbour as themselves; they can even love God, or what to them stands in the place of Him whom we call God, with their whole heart and soul; and we must needs confess of them, as of other little children, that of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.

CHAPTER V

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE VIRTUES

I. If the argument of the preceding chapter is correct, morality must be in the truest sense natural. There is, indeed, no word more fertile in ambiguities. Natural means one thing when opposed to conventional, another when opposed to artificial, and something else when opposed to unheard-of or grotesque; something else, again, when opposed to supernatural. But, properly speaking, the word applies to qualities whose absence would radically alter the character of the thing to which they belong. To go wrong (to use a familiar illustration) is "natural" for a clock, for a clock which never went wrong would be something weird and extraordinary among clocks. A mother's love is natural, for without it a mother would lose her claim to true motherhood. It is natural for mankind to err, because an unerring humanity would be a contradiction in terms. Eating and breathing and sleeping are natural, because if we left off eating and sleeping and breathing we should very soon cease to exist at all. Morality, as we have understood it, is natural in this sense. If mankind rejected morality, mankind would not continue to live. Like eating and drinking for the animal organism, morality, in the sense of tribal and family feeling, is essential to the *bene esse* and to the very *esse* of human society. It needs no social contract to force it upon reluctant

human minds. It needs no appeal to present or future rewards or punishments, with the calculating self-love which this begets; morality is there because man is there, and its departure would leave man to reel back into the beast.

But we shall, perhaps, be told that we have been taking altogether too narrow a view of the nature of morality. We have been confining morality to a single virtue. We have identified it with disinterestedness or sympathy. Has not morality a far wider content? Must we not find room for the two great divisions of virtue, the self-regarding and the other-regarding? Must we not, in the next place, assign to their proper places the various individual virtues — courage, self-control, justice, truth, chastity, prudence, wisdom? How can we understand these at all if we find the root of morality in family or tribal feeling, and in the primitive attitude of mind which is anterior to egoism and altruism alike?

We have already noticed that most ethical teachers have fixed upon some one principle of morals from which they have derived the various aspects of goodness. We may refer, for example, to Kant. Kant finds that every virtue is an application of what he calls the "categorical imperative"; "act so that the law of your action could become a universal law." To Martineau, the central principle of morals is reverence for the intuitive law of duty; and the various virtues are arranged in a hierarchy according as they embody more of this reverence or less. Such schemes suffer from two disadvantages: they have no relation to the actual history of the growth of morality in the race; and they are often reduced to rather

artificial methods of deriving the individual virtue from the central principle. Kant would tell us, for instance, that truth must be right because we cannot imagine all men speaking falsehood. But it has often been felt a difficult matter to know how the giving away of money, on the principles of Kant, is right; since, if everyone followed the rule, the giving of money would be quite superfluous. Nor can we really suppose, as Martineau's classification would suggest, that love of culture is a higher virtue than love of liberty.

It must be admitted that in the earliest times there is hardly room for either a classification or a list of virtues. Life as understood by the Kaffirs of the present day or by our own ancestors as they can be studied, for example, in the old poem of Beowulf, was not yet parcelled out into occasions demanding justice or truth-telling or humility. To be brave and faithful and obedient in war, to keep both licence and indolence within the bounds of the customary and usual in peace, will suffice to describe a respectable and even blameless life. In the world of Homer's Greeks and Trojans, the great sin is insolent arrogance or contempt for one's fellows and their opinions and comfort. Achilles may ravage towns and cities with the utmost barbarity, slaughtering their men and keeping their women to be his slaves or concubines; or he may lose his temper with his feudal superior, and bereave his comrades of his indispensable prowess in battle. All this is regarded as natural; it is only when he dishonours the corpse of Hector, in outrage of the reverence due to the dead, that he begins to lose the poet's sympathy. Odysseus, the "man of many wiles," may support himself in his adven-

turous homeward journey by piracy; the real objects of indignation are the suitors, who have defied the sacred laws of hospitality. Even the modern reader will probably find his own moral verdict, in spite of himself, corresponding with the poet's. The opposite of this arrogance is the reverent regard for good customs, for the restrictions imposed by social feeling (though with no further "sanctions") on self-will and pride. The same contrast between insolence and reverence for the established order of society is the main interest in nearly all the plays of Æschylus and Sophocles, and these deal chiefly with the actual family relationships and the curses attending their defiance. The range of subjects chosen by Euripides is wider; but, even in his plays, there is a curious absence of interests which are unconnected with family and racial ties.

In this respect, at least, the Hebrews were strikingly akin to the Greeks. The Old Testament contains many lists of virtues;[1] but they are quite distinct from such a list as Martineau works out in his ethical hierarchy. They are all instances of justice and fairness to equals, kindly consideration and beneficence to inferiors, or the avoidance of acts directly displeasing to God—the majority of which, on closer consideration, turn out to be also the marks of the service of alien deities, and therefore treachery to Jehovah and to Israel alike. The whole religion of the Old Testament, indeed, is based on the promise made to a single family, "to Abraham and to his seed for ever." The fulfilment of the promise is made conditional on the preservation of the family spirit—that is, refusal to join in alien acts of worship or to honour the gods of strangers, readiness to supply the

[1] *e.g.*, Ezek. xviii.; Job xxxi.; Psalm xv.

needs of others and refusal to take advantage of them. The heroes of Israel are simply men who revived this spirit when it was flagging or imperilled.

Evidently, then, it is possible—not only for savages, but for people of considerable intellectual attainments—to miss discovering the existence of a number of separate virtues; and where definite attempts were made to hunt them out and classify them, those attempts came to very little. Plato's four virtues are really the two virtuous principles of courage and self-control, and of the general spirit of harmony and order between the citizens of a state or the interests and aims of a man's private life. Justice, Plato's fourth virtue, is only another word for human excellence in general. Aristotle's list of ten "virtues," beginning with courage and self-control once more, is constructed on no definite principle, and before the end the virtues become mere notes of cultured social intercourse.

II. All this need not frighten us from starting out upon a classification of our own; but our classification will have to avoid the mistakes of both Aristotle and Kant. It should observe the actual rise of the separate virtues, truth, chastity, respect for property, and so forth, in human society. Such an investigation would show that the root of the separate virtues is nothing but the attitude we have been considering hitherto, the consciousness of a common interest, which is best seen in the family.

In the first place, the regard for truth, as many parents and missionaries have been compelled to reflect, does not seem to be innate in the human mind. The child and the savage will "embroider" and outrage reality without compunction. Yet a time comes when truth is honoured and a lie despised.

Whence comes the change? The child learns it from elders who themselves had to learn it before him. But who taught the lesson first? The instinct of the race for comradeship and loyalty. Truth-telling to neighbours was enjoined by the social conscience long before truth-telling to strangers was dreamt of. To deceive a man who belonged to the same group as yourself, and whose interests were identical with yours, was not simply wicked; it was foolish; it was as stupid as telling yourself that you had eaten your dinner when you had taken no food since waking. To deceive a man who had nothing to do with you was a very different matter, and might be distinctly meritorious; it could only become wrong when, in your idea of it, the group to which you belonged had become large enough to include even him.

Again, chastity has been in many ages a virtue of very limited scope. In the form in which we understand it, it may be entirely absent from those races whose matrimonial classifications are complexity itself. Except in the higher races, it is rare to find instances of a constancy of passion which will survive lapse of time and loss of youth and strength and beauty. To the primitive man, marriage means more or less exclusive property in a woman or women. Chastity has its birth in loyal respect for the property of my neighbours. In the eyes of the law and of multitudes of civilised men, chastity is no more than this at the present day. We are not so far advanced as the subjects of the Duke of Vienna and his deputy, Angelo.[1] Only by degrees does this respect for my neighbours' property in their women become respect for women

[1] "Measure for Measure," Act i., Sc. ii.

in themselves, whether married or not. It is a very long time before abstention from all who are definitely the belongings of other people becomes abstention from all save the one who definitely belongs to me.

The history of retributive justice shows the same development. The impulse to return a blow is instinctive. Animals as well as men will either resist an attack or else run away. And the community will resist attacks upon it as well as the individual. The penalties of this "wild justice" fall, in the earliest times, on those who violate their duty of loyalty to the group, either by killing or injuring a member of it, by breaking some restriction or taboo, or by refusing to do what the group expects of them. Such penalties, again, are apt to fall, as in the case of Korah or Achan, not on the individual wrong-doer alone, but on his dependants also.[1] Even sin does not suffice to isolate the individual. The wrong is regarded as done by the whole of the smaller group to the larger one. Then, by slow stages, responsibility is narrowed down to the actual agent; the punishment is suited more carefully to the crime, and administered by selected officers; and the list of actions regarded by the community as breaches of the common feeling or offences against itself is considerably enlarged.

The same thing may easily be seen in the case

[1] That the wife and children as well as the criminal should suffer for the crime is so common in savage tribes as to suggest that it is an obvious necessity of justice to the primitive mind. Nor can the statement be confined to primitive man. In Athens, sacrilege meant banishment for the children, and even for the whole clan. An Anglo-Saxon child might be sold into slavery to provide for the penalty incurred by a guilty father. The heaviest part of the punishment of modern crime often falls upon the dependants of the criminal.

of distributive justice. At first, the community takes care, by the roughest methods, that no one except the recognised chiefs shall be rich enough to be conspicuous among their comrades; and at the same time no one is allowed to be absolutely in need, unless he is personally unable or unwilling to render the necessary services to the community, or unless times are bad for everyone alike. As the relations between individuals grow more complex, the community may pay increasing attention to the share of the products of industry which each man is allowed to secure (as was done by both the law of the State and the regulations of the gilds in the Middle Ages); or it may withdraw into the background out of respect for the doctrine of *laissez faire*. But whatever action it takes can be traced directly to the determination to preserve the bond between itself and the individuals who compose it.

The exponents of the *laissez faire* principle hold that it is the duty of the State simply to protect the rights of the individual. Certainly the State must do this, whether it does anything else or not. But what are those rights? The right to live, it will be answered; to hold property, to be free, to be educated in childhood, to vote, to be exempt from taxation apart from representation, and so on. The "rights of man" will vary according to the age in which they are announced. But what is their basis? We have not always conceded the right to education; we do not concede universally the right to property or to freedom; occasionally we even deny the right to life. A right, as a claim recognised and enforced by the community, only exists so long as its maintenance enables certain services to be rendered to the community. A man

has a right to live, to be educated, to be free, because without his life, his freedom, his education, certain services that the State needs will be impossible from him. When these services are regarded as impossible, as in the case of the murderer, the maniac, the imbecile child, the right is withheld. It is true that when a right is once formulated in the statute book, its natural basis is often forgotten ; it is regarded as self-existent and even self-explanatory. But questions of new and disputed rights are always arising, and they are always answered, ultimately, on the same grounds, whether they concern the citizenship of slaves, the State support of old age or of children, or the concession of votes to women.[1] The principle of the common interest, the mutual service of the members of a group, seen at its best in the family, has not only presided at the birth of the several virtues ; it has controlled the growth of national jurisprudence.[2]

III. We can do more than trace the rise of the virtues from one abundant and common source. We can watch their growth in the moral consciousness of different nations. The true lesson of history is the gradual expansion of moral conceptions and their embodiment in public institutions and in the lives of private men and women. It is true that caution is needed in drawing this lesson. In the first place, individuals have always tended to progress "out of the line." Moses, Socrates, Shakespeare, though each of them distinctly men of their age, cannot be explained as normal steps in advance

[1] This connexion between rights and duties is implied, however perversely, in the extraordinary argument that women ought not to vote because they can never fight or even be policemen.

[2] See Green, T. H., "Works," vol. ii. p. 450 ; Bosanquet, B., "Philosophical Theory of the State," pp. 203 ff.

of what preceded them chronologically, nor do they simply lead to further advance in the next period. They stand out like isolated peaks in a mountain range, buttressed by the lower slopes, but giving stability and strength to the whole. Still less could we assert that Jesus occurs within the line of normal advance in thought or religion. He stands as far beyond the twentieth century as beyond the first; yet he belongs to every intervening age, as the explanation of whatever is valuable in each, and also to the ages in which, long before his birth, men wrestled doubtfully with the problems of conduct and intellect.

Secondly, we must not pay too much attention to the sacred books of the various religions, in attempting to estimate the moral level of the countries to which those religions belonged. Doubtless, it is true of religions, as of prophets and teachers, that " by their fruits ye shall know them." But the morals of the Bhagavad-gita are reflected in the morals of very few of the Brahmans who profess to regard that beautiful work as inspired; a whole world of difference lies between Confucius or even Mohammed and many who revere those great names; even the New Testament, if " known " by the conduct usual in London or Paris or New York, would have to forfeit its position of unique moral supremacy and grandeur. The " sacred books " are at best the ideals of those who recognise them; a man may live very near to his ideals; it may be impossible to understand his life apart from them; but he may treat his ideals as religion, to use Milton's figure, is often treated; kindly entertained in the morning and evening, but sent

away during the day while her host is at his business or his pleasure.

Safer guidance is to be found in the institutions of a nation, or in its imaginative literature, especially its drama. For modern times the investigation has the advantage of recourse to newspapers, which, even more than the drama, hold up the mirror to the age. The more elevated literature of a country is generally unreliable for this purpose, unless we know that the author meant to keep in touch with his time, and was able to attain his end. We can rely on Chaucer and Shakespeare; we should listen with hesitation to Milton or Wordsworth; we may use Browning and Dante, if we remember the special relation in which they stood to their age—at once interpreters, critics, and preachers.

Let us now turn, with this purpose in mind, to the ancient nations of the East. What can be learnt from them of the growth of moral conceptions and conduct? We are met at once by the contrast between sacred writings and common practice, by the diversity of even informed judgments on moral standards, and by the apparent absence of change in the history of the national morals. These difficulties face us as soon as we begin, for example, to consider Chinese morality. What is not doubtful is that Chinese morality considers reciprocity as the last word on conduct, and that the really important things in life, apart from the satisfying of a man's daily needs, are reverence to parents and ancestors and the stability of the family group. Chinese morality, in fact, corresponds exactly to what we have already seen of Chinese society. The State is simply one great family, and the Emperor is at once its head, its

representative, and the present glory of all the divine ancestorhood. That is to say, for a third of the human race, the family bond has been for ages the acknowledged sovereign of human life and conduct, the source of virtue, law and religion alike. An individual Chinese may call himself either a Buddhist, a Taoist, or a follower of Confucius; what he really believes in and worships is the authority of the heads of his family.[1]

When we go back to the beginning of things in India, we observe a closely-knit race invading, like the ancient Hebrews, a foreign country, and, unlike the Hebrews, preserving their own national peculiarities the more carefully in the presence of the aliens around them. The race is divided among itself also into groups; and again, within these groups we observe a further organisation into villages and families. In process of time these divisions become hardened; the four main divisions become forty, four hundred, and more, until the minutest difference of accupation becomes the ground for the formation of a fresh endogamic caste. At the same time, the claims of the family proper and the village community persist. As we might expect, in an atmosphere heavy with inconsistency and paradox, the most elevated holiness can despise and defy every one of these bonds, and is applauded for doing so; but for the bulk of the population the sole virtue is loyalty to the group or groups into which a man is born, coupled with respect for the superior group, that of the Brahmans. Against the categorical imperative of their customs, indi-

[1] We have yet to see whether the recent political changes in China will have any effect on the really deep-seated social and religious ideals of the mass of its inhabitants.

vidual desires or dislikes would never even attempt to protest. The history of the non-Aryan races in India, on the other hand, is a history of simple tribal or family loyalty which has had no difficulty, for the most part, in adapting itself to the more complicated system of the Aryan invaders.

We can find less information on this subject in the ample records of the civilisation of the Euphrates and Tigris valley. We know far more of the history, the religion, and the law, than of the distinctly moral ideas of Babylon and Assyria. Their religious literature is chiefly composed of penitential psalms, prayers for deliverance, curses or magical formulæ, and omens. These are almost entirely directed to the avoidance of individual burdens and ills; but in the great law code of Hammurabi it is possible to see how the family group underlies the conception of justice. Many of the private and business letters which have been preserved show that same sense of family solidarity which is so marked in the Paston letters of the sixteenth century.

We are on surer ground when we advance to Greece. Greece was a country of city states, and the city, to an Athenian or a Spartan or an Argive, was at once home, country, heaven, and god. "It was the individual on his ideal side, the enduring substance which outlived his transient existence."[1] There is no more beautiful expression of this spirit than the famous epitaph of the three hundred Spartans who fell with Leonidas at Thermopylæ. "O stranger, tell the Lacedæmonians that we lie here, obedient to their bidding." But even to the Greek, the state was not all. Leading men, as in

[1] See Butcher, S. H., "Some Aspects of the Greek Genius," pp. 51 ff.

the Italian republics, often put their devotion to their family before their duty to the city; and among the mass of the people also, families had their worship, their sacrifices, their common traditions. The laws laid the greatest stress on the continuity of the family; and no political reconstruction was likely to be successful unless it took account of family connexions. Aristotle, sanest and most practical of Greek philosophers, knowing well the importance of tribes and "brotherhoods" in Greek politics, laid it down that all society had grown out of the partnership of the family household.

Roman history has given us an unparalleled series of heroes; men of simple courage and unswerving patriotism; Brutus, Horatius, Scævola, Cincinnatus, Flaminius, Regulus, Scipio, Cato. As the admiration of their countrymen sets them before us, there is the strongest likeness between them. In their devotion to the needs of their country, and their absolute blindness to every other consideration, they are at one. All else in their characters is forgotten. That is what the ordinary Roman admired and, in his way, followed and imitated. When Virgil set himself to write the great epic which should shed lustre on the new regime of Augustus, he could choose no theme but "so huge a task—to found the race of the Romans"; [1] and his favourite epithet for his hero was "pius," an untranslatable word which combines reverence to the family bonds, loyalty to the State, and devotion to the gods.

But in Rome, as in Greece, loyalty to the State was built up out of family loyalty. Every housefather was king in his own household—lord of life and death. And every citizen knew that his civic

[1] "Tantæ molis erat Romanam condere gentem" (Æn. i. 37).

rights were assured because he was by birth a member of a certain family, a Cornelius, a Julius, or a Sempronius. An alien, when he received citizenship, would be accepted, by a legal fiction, into some great family. Every emancipated slave took the name, and became a member, of his master's gens. Similarly, when Stoicism began to attract all the greatest minds of Rome, the most valued of its gifts was the suggestion that all men are in truth of one great family, of which Jupiter is the divine head; hence they must act as brothers to one another. And we can watch this conception, in the writings of Epictetus and Aurelius, giving rise to a new emphasis on purity, justice and truthfulness, humanity and patience. "Do you not remember who you are and what men you are ruling?" Epictetus asks of the owner of neglectful slaves, "that they are kinsmen and brothers by nature, that they are descendants of Zeus?" "Rejoice in one thing alone," said Marcus Aurelius, "and rest in it, namely, in passing from one social action to another with mindfulness of God." "We are made for co-operation, like the feet, the hands, the eye-lids, the upper and lower rows of teeth."[1]

IV. It is not strange that students of these two greatest of Roman Stoics have often been reminded of Christianity. Just as the cosmopolitanism and humanitarianism of the later Stoics can be traced from the intense but narrow patriotism of Rome, the breadth and sweep of Christianity takes its rise in the equally narrow partiotism of Palestine. When the religion of Israel, after the exile, developed into Judaism, its patriotism became still narrower as

[1] Other quotations may be found in Davidson, W. L., "The Stoic Creed," pp. 163, 165 ff.

its hatred of the Gentile world deepened. Small hope that from such a source should rise a world religion, knowing neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free. But the conception of a family wide as the human race was formulated by a man nurtured in the most exclusive religion the world has known. And naturally so. Where else could he have learnt so thoroughly that concentrated absorbtion in the life of a larger self, in a community which gave him all that he could ever care to possess ? Once this was understood, he was ready to see that community enlarged, until every member of the human race might hope for admission.

Every reader of St Paul's letters knows that he attributed his own grasp of this principle, like everything else that he valued, to Christ. And the whole race was one—so it had been revealed to him—because it had one Saviour and Redeemer, even Christ. But the nature of the moral life was at bottom the same. What, in Paul's view, Christ had done, was to bring about an enormous widening of its extension, and to make possible, for the whole of mankind, an obedience which otherwise had proved impossible even for the Jews. Paul, like the Old Testament authors, gives us several lists of virtues ; but they all flow from one all-comprehending virtue. When a man has received the spirit of the life of this larger community, its fruits will be love, meekness, gentleness, forbearance, self-control. The true attitude of mind begets the corresponding virtues. More characteristically still, he regards the virtues as so many attributes of the true attitude ; it is love itself—the love which binds the members to one another and to the head of their society — which is long-suffering and kind and

decorous and humble and patient. First comes virtue, and the virtues follow.

This enlargement of the State into mankind, accomplished independently, though with widely differing preconceptions, by the later Stoics and by the great apostle of the Christian faith, was very far from being grasped by the majority of either pagans or Christians. The decline of the Roman Empire was not so much a decay either of virtue or of political or military strength, as of the bonds which held men together. If we may use the expression, the nature was gone out of the Empire. The irruption of the barbarians from the North seemed to the astonished and terrified spectators to be the death-blow inflicted by the wrath of an outraged heaven. In reality, it was the beginning of a new life. The savage hordes, for thus they seemed to their victims, had few virtues and fewer graces. One virtue, however, they did possess; personal loyalty and coherence.

Throughout the long dark ages, amidst their constant warfare and devastation, three forces were silently working; first, the personal devotion of liegemen to their superiors, which in time produced the feudal system, with all its virtues of faithfulness and obedience in vassals, gentleness and kindliness in their lords; second, the co-operation of neighbours with each other, from which were to spring the village community and township, the gild and the commercial league, with their virtues of honesty, industry and thrift; and third, the self-dedication of individuals to religious orders, fruitful alike of good and evil, but holding up before the world the ideals, however neglected and betrayed, of reverence, humility and self-denial in the pursuit of a

common end. Chivalry was born from the intercourse between the first and third of these forces; stained as it was by much hypocrisy and even brutality, it extended the virtue of trustworthiness into the grace of care and protection for the weak, and continence and chastity by the side of loyalty and honour.

It is common to assert that the whole spirit of the Middle Ages was gathered up in Dante. Dante was not the representative of his age, but its transfiguration. Yet the lineaments of his age can be discerned behind the glowing splendours of his passionate and rare convictions. The two poles of his universe are love and order; and order itself is born of love;[1] the saints in heaven move to music, in a kind of rhythmical dance, and the opportunity for any act of love kindles their radiance afresh. Hell is an inverted hierarchy of vices; the further you descend, the deeper grow the darkness and horror of selfishness, hate and defiance of all the laws of social life. At the very root of hell is treachery; Satan himself is the arch-traitor, and the criminals whom he is for ever grinding in his monstrous jaws are Brutus and Cassius, who slew their lord the Roman Emperor, and Judas, "which also betrayed Jesus." The same view of morals is expressed in the "De Monarchia." The glorification of the Roman Empire simply expresses Dante's reverence for the strong rule which turns the jarring rivalries of cities and men into the harmony of the true family. No one had said this so plainly before; but all the thought of the Middle Ages implies it. The period which began with the

[1] Compare the well-known concluding line of the Paradiso, "L'Amor che muove il sole e l'altre stelle."

re-appearance of clan loyalty as the centre of life witnessed great mass-movements alternating with headstrong individual impulses — the ambitions alike of the warrior and the merchant ; but everyone was convinced, in theory at least, that all goodness was gathered up in loyalty to comrades, and good faith to superiors and inferiors and equals alike.

This " family " characteristic of goodness is well illustrated in Chaucer—of all our English writers the man of most catholic sympathies. The perfect flower of mediæval chivalry is pictured in Chaucer's portrait of the "veray parfit gentil knighte." The pilgrims with whom he deals most kindly are those who recognise most fully the claims of others, the squire, the clerk, the parson ; he is angry with none except the pardoner, the summoner or the reeve—men who have no aim beyond the filling of their own pockets or their own stomachs. In the tales, his most striking motives are connected with constancy between kinsmen and married poeple, as if interest and goodness were both most at home in the family.

To turn to Shakespeare is like turning to the universe. He refuses to " abide our questions." He will shrink into no categories. He does not enforce morals, or criticize them ; he gazes down upon them, as upon all human life, from a cloud-capped height of his own. But it can hardly be a coincidence that of his four great tragedies, Hamlet, Othello, Macbeth, and Lear, three turn on the loyalty of husbands and wives, parents and children to one another, and the fourth is a study of the man whose original outrage on loyalty isolates him from friends, subjects, and wife alike. The later plays

all deal with the re-knitting of the sundered ties of kinship; the dramatist, as if to symbolise the way in which Providence sets right the world, himself describes the setting right of the disordered families where intrigue and selfishness have made all other virtues impossible.

Even in the earlier plays, behind the romantic interest which he found in his sources, and which his audiences demanded, move the same large figures of constancy and faith; it is the ethical interest which really dominates the stage. Will the individual be true to the ties that bind him to his fellows? What will happen if those ties are broken? The bright and adventurous virtues of Rosalind, Viola, and Portia are formed in the same mould as the stainless purity of Desdemona or Imogen, and the unwavering self-devotion of Cordelia. We can admire Theseus, Bassanio, or Henry V., for the very qualities whose presence, and flight, make us tremble at the fate of Coriolanus or Antony or Othello. It may be said that Shakespeare chose those subjects and characters because he knew they would be popular with the spectators. Doubtless, Shakespeare's was a thoroughly practical mind, and would never have entertained or affected a love for what was "caviare to the general"; but we may well doubt whether a great artist has ever been content to produce to order in that fashion, however useful it might be to the profits that he, like other people, naturally desired to make. But if it were so, we should merely have another proof that in Shakespeare's time, that particular type of excellence was the object at once of the greatest admiration and the deepest interest of the public.

V. It is impossible to track the principle through

all the forests of modern history and literature. But it is there for all who search for it. Virtue is single. It is the loyalty to those who share our lives and in whose interests we find our own. The circumstances of human life are infinite, and therefore this virtue will manifest itself in an infinite number of different ways. Writers on ethics distribute its manifestation, to the best of their power, among the well-known virtues; but goodness itself is a vastly more complicated affair than any list of virtues could possibly suggest. It is so complicated because it is so simple. Hence we can easily understand how, as St James says, he who offends in one point breaks the whole law. To be false to this principle of goodness opens the door to the entrance of any one of all the vices.

The family thus becomes the true theatre of goodness, because nowhere else can the identification of my interest with the interest of others be either so complete or so natural. It is therefore significant that the express contribution of Christianity to morals has been the eagerness with which it has devoted itself to the enforcement and glorification of sexual purity. Its object in doing this has not always been the maintenance or the exaltation of the family. Scriptural passages erroneously interpreted,[1] materialistic conceptions of holiness, and perhaps the influence of pagan contemporary cults, greatly helped the growth of the conception of ordinary married life as a hindrance to the complete service of the Father and the Son.[2] But for most people, as the Church well knew, purity meant purity in wedlock and not in monastic institutions. Conduct of which the ancient world scarcely dis-

[1] Matt. xix. 12; 1 Cor. vii. 32.

[2] See page 328.

approved except when flaunted outrageously in the face of public decency, yet which, more than anything else, sapped the foundations of the fine and stable "old-fashioned" morality, was definitely banned by the new religion. Disobedience to her precepts is still practised, and, in many quarters, condoned; but her prohibitions have done their work. Christendom has weathered many a storm which would have proved fatal to the races of antiquity; and the purity of household life which is her gift, if we can but preserve it, will be the seed from which the virtues will spring up afresh in every generation.

VI. It is now quite easy to understand why, to the Greek mind, ethics and politics were really regarded as part of the same discipline. The Greeks, indeed, regarded ethics as a sub-division of politics. Nor should we on our part be inclined to assert, to the contrary, that the citizen has narrower moral opportunities than the father or the brother. But, in truth, such comparisons are idle. Sometimes we are inclined to yield our warmest admiration to a Hampden or a Regulus; sometimes to a Lady Nithsdale or a Hermione. The important thing is that a man should be true to the claims of his neighbour, whether in his own home, his city, or in the wider commonwealth of humanity. Polonius' maxim, "to thine own self be true; thou canst not then be false to any man" is really, as we are not surprised to find, an inversion of the correct order.

Truth to oneself—who is sufficient for that perplexing command? How shall I know what my self is and what it demands? How can I make that formula the touchstone of my conduct or put to flight with that war-cry the subtle temptations

of self-love, malice, and vainglory? But falsehood to others is a different thing. That I can avoid. I can make myself quite clear about that. I know perfectly well when I am deceiving them, aiming at an end which will mean their loss or grief, plotting against their peace or happiness. The sovereign preservative against pride is to set one's mind not on one's own interests, but on the interests of others. True loyalty to oneself—the only loyalty to oneself that is worth caring about—is born of steadfast love to one's neighbours. True, neither Polonius nor Shakespeare himself ever invented a maxim which can be relied upon to solve all moral difficulties, and answer all the questions of causistry. Conduct knows of no magic sword which will cleave a way through every jungle and split asunder every rock. But, unless we are to surrender the idea of a unity in the moral life altogether, it will be found in obedience to that impulse, often unconscious, often misunderstood, from which, as a matter of history, all moral advance has been derived.

There are, moreover, certain reasons which have always made the family an easier and simpler school of virtue than the State. The existence of the common interest, the "common wealth," in the State has been concealed by three great distinctions; rulers in contrast with ruled, masters in contrast with servants or slaves, and men in contrast with women. The first two have broken up the unity of the social group almost from the beginning of all social life; the third has meant the uneven pressure of burdens on one half of the human race all through its history. In the family, these foes of intrinsic goodness do not exist, or rather, they do not exist as foes. The interests of rulers and

ruled, parents and children, normally speaking, are too closely allied to allow of a definite clash; and behind interest is the affection which kinship and common life together constantly generate. Even between masters and slaves, daily intercourse and practical considerations alike tend to replace suspicion and conflict by confidence and co-operation. The position of the family slave in ancient Palestine and Athens was very different from that of the Helot on a Spartan farm, or the negro in the cotton plantations of Carolina. Moreover, where family life is at all real, the civic subjection of women is inevitably modified; the services which none but she can render, and the affection which will have existed, at least for a time, between her and her husband and children, make her as much the ruler as the ruled; and though, even in the household, the different parts of the common burdens may be very unevenly divided, attention is called at least as much to the burden borne by all as to the different parts allotted to each; and where the burden as a whole is not too heavy (as poverty or misfortune may make it), its weight may be quite forgotten in the satisfaction begotten of aiming, not wholly without success, at a common end.

VII. This last contention, however, needs a little more consideration. It cannot be denied, indeed, that throughout the history of society women have lived in subjection to men. The matriarchate of savage tribes means that power and property pass, not to the woman, but through her. Among nomadic tribes, where the men hunt and fight, the women have the less perilous but always more continuous and laborious task of carrying, digging, and cooking, to say nothing of

all the care of the children. The principles of chivalry—first expressed in the New Testament—are unknown. They are equally unknown in patriarchal and agricultural societies. Nothing could be more brutal towards women than some of the sentences in the laws of Manu or even in the Shi-King. It will often be found that savages quite low down in the scale of civilisation treat their women far better than nations who would look with infinite contempt upon such barbarians.[1] Euripides' dramatic statement of the wrongs of the Athenian woman in the ennui of her respectable but prison-like seclusion, is well known.[2] As far as the law went, the position of the Roman woman was equally helpless: and the Mediæval Church, for all its assertion of the blessedness of continence and the indissolubility of marriage, did little if anything to protect woman from the contempt and cruelty of the opposite sex; the brutality of the language used of women by some of the Church Fathers almost passes belief. Only within quite recent years, in this and other countries, has there been any tendency to lighten some of the heavier burdens of woman by legislation.

But there is another side to the question. Codes of law are not the only evidence to be examined. In the nature of the case, laws will often concentrate attention on what is socially the exception rather than the rule. Travellers constantly tell us of cases where the women are not noticeably less happy than the children or the men. No one would say that in the mass the womanhood of India or China

[1] Cf. Ratzel, F., "Völkerkunde," Bd. i. p. 88. "The position of women in primitive society is as full of contradictions as in highly civilised peoples."

[2] "Medea," ll. 244 ff.

is habitually oppressed or ill-treated. It must be remembered that in India the prohibition of re-marriage, with all the misery it entails, is only enforced over about a quarter of the population. Customs that seem to us harsh or cruel will often be welcomed by the women themselves. The religion which includes the narrative of the woman taken in adultery in its sacred writings is a perpetual defiance of the sensual contempt with which the ancient world constantly tended to regard its women; yet the literary documents of Greece and Rome, from Homer to the tombs of the later Roman Empire, show in what honour and affection woman was constantly held. The same thing may be said of Babylonia, Egypt, and even, as it would appear from its artistic remains, of the ancient civilisation of Crete. Nor could it be held for a moment that the position of woman before the law in Christendom has corresponded to her social position, as witnessed to either in literature or the records of history.[1]

The reason for this difference is that woman is not only a member of a sex—and that the weaker one—but of a family. That is to say, economic and emotional considerations, as well as physical necessities, have gone to define her position. Naturally debarred from the exciting and dangerous pleasures of the battle-field, the chase and the council gathering, she has from time immemorial been the builder, the tiller of the soil, the weaver and cook, the doctor and nurse; often the priestess and the witch; and, in addition to this, the whole labour of keeping up the numbers of the tribe has

[1] Compare Lecky, W. H., "History of European Morals," vol. ii. ch. v., and the careful sketches of feminine types in "The Lady," by Mrs Putnam.

been hers alone. When, in course of time, some of these functions were taken over by the other sex, the importance of the remainder increased. With such important and indispensable duties to perform, it was inevitable that certain rights should have been accorded to her. But the sphere, both of her duties and of her rights, was in the family. Whatever the authorities of the tribal camp-fire or the law courts might say, she held a position which could be touched only at the general peril. Quite apart from his superstitious fears of the magical powers supposed to be resident in her sex, the most brutal savage, like the coarsest labouring-man to-day, realised that to quarrel permanently with the woman of the family meant to quarrel with every comfort and convenience of his life.

The family means co-operation and mutual toleration and need. It means also affection. By some surely divine law of our nature, co-operation and living together regularly generate affection. Where passion is short-lived, affection will arise to take its place. The closer and more abiding the co-operation, the more powerful is the affection.[1] Between the sexes, the absence of affection is unthinkable. It may be short-lived and almost animal; it may be degraded by social customs, shrivelled by poverty, or forced to struggle with selfishness and cruelty. It is as old as the human race, or even older. And with conjugal goes parental affection. Even in families where the woman is governed by the Hindu rule of the three

[1] Compare Bosanquet, B., *op. cit.*, p. 300. "The mere remaining together of the units, a demand of their physical needs, is almost enough of itself to transform their inevitable mutual dependence into a relation of intentional service, rooted in affection, and tinged with some degree of forethought."

obediences — to father, husband, and son — the greatest influence of all, as in many a home in England, may be found to be wielded by the old mother or the wife. Reversing the familiar formula for our English monarchy, she may not reign, but she will generally govern, or take a not unworthy share in the government. As co-operator, and as wife and mother, she is saved from the evils into which her sex might otherwise have dragged her.

The danger of her position lies in this: if she ceases to play her part as a member of the family, she may find herself unprotected.[1] And social and industrial changes of recent times are making this possibility a very practical consideration. One function after another has been withdrawn from her. She neither builds the house nor ploughs the field, nor weaves the garment, nor, except in a subordinate capacity, tends the sick, in her own family. She must bear the child; but in many ranks of society she will have very little of the labour of nursing and training him; even the cooking of the food and the tending of the house is increasingly accomplished by hired assistance.

On the other hand, ever since the industrial revolution of the eighteenth century, woman has been dragged into toil of another kind. She has worked, not as an honoured member of a family group, in a fashion where no one could replace her, but as a "hand" in a factory; and the reward of her toil has differed only from that of her husband and her sons in that it has been relatively smaller.

[1] This is not the same thing as to repeat the unintelligent formula, "a woman's place is in the home." The word "home" is far too ambiguous, and far too little considered by those who use the words, to allow the statement to be of the least value.

The industrial system has not destroyed the family. That has been as yet happily beyond its power. But it has done much to modify family life, and in the most dangerous directions. Without the factory legislation of the first half of the nineteenth century it might have done more. Suffice it to say that when social and industrial conditions combine to alter what has hitherto been the natural life of woman, legislation must step in. Affection alone is not sufficient to protect her. When there appears within the sex a large and increasing class of women who find all their work done for them, and another large and increasing class who work hard and usefully, but in a manner which benefits their family only because they are additional wage-earners—that is, because they are ceasing to do the work of women and trying to do the work of men—there is a danger lest all the work done by the family for women should be lost.[1]

It is by doing this work for women that the family has proved itself the source of some of the most beautiful and delicate virtues. Purity, gentleness, patience, trust, self-forgetful affection, and the readiness to forgive and forget—where could these have matured save in that close and tender fellowship of diverse sexes and ages of which the centre is always the woman? Nursed in the family, these virtues have sown themselves in the wider life of the community and the State. But let the family co-operation decay, and the position of the woman, with her peculiar duties as well as her honourable rights, passes out of mind, and these virtues may decay, and with their decay endanger all the rest. The measure of the worth of a society

[1] Compare Olive Schreiner, "Woman and Labour."

is the position of its women. The position of the women is secured by the existence of the society within the society, the family.

Hence, as an institution, it would seem that the family will always be needed by the side of the State. If Socrates, to understand justice, had to see it "writ large" in the state, we need, correspondingly, to see it "writ clear" in family life. Our rapid survey of the history of morals has shown us how the larger group has constantly had recourse to the smaller one for the preservation of its own spirit. Good citizens are born, not simply from women, but from mothers and wives; a man who has not known the discipline of a family will be slow to yield a willing obedience to the larger yet less intense discipline of his city or nation. Battles between opposing armies may have been won in school playgrounds; the real battles which mankind has to wage, with cowardice, laziness and pride, self-seeking and passion, are won round the family hearth, in the birth chamber, and by the bedsides which sickness and death approach to claim their meed of fortitude, sympathy, and the facing of new conditions and fresh mutual labour.

CHAPTER VI

THE MEANING OF GOODNESS

I. In the last two chapters we have been content to follow the historical method, and to trace the growth of goodness in the life and thought of nations who may be taken to represent both the childhood and the maturity of the race. But the historical method, however necessary, can never be convincing. We can learn much about a man from studying his biography; but we must go further if we wish to look into his soul. The very events in his life which have most impressed us may be, to those who know him best, insignificant and trivial. When we have viewed the "pulse of the machine," the biography may have to be re-written. The historical method may prove a treacherous guide. "How do you know that this clan-sentiment which you have identified with goodness may not be a single and perhaps rather unimportant aspect of goodness? May not goodness, in fact, be at times entirely antagonistic to this savage schoolboy loyalty?" Or we may be asked, "When you are dealing with nations and races, can you rely on your induction, or on any induction? Are not your conclusions liable to be upset by the discovery of some fresh race where such coherence is non-existent, or where it produces nothing to which the name of goodness could be given?" And a third objector may urge on us that we have bestowed

our praises far too cheaply; that clan-loyalty is a very different thing from goodness; that a tribe may hold together triumphantly, and yet allow its members to break all the ten commandments, and that the most disciplined submission to the laws of the race, as among the Spartans, the Masai, and the Red Indians, may co-exist with fraud, murder, and all uncleanness.

From such attacks as these we may attempt to defend ourselves by recalling a distinction already made. The nature of goodness is one thing; its embodiment in action is quite another. Nor must we be afraid of the seeming paradoxes which will follow. A man may be a good Masai, even if he slaughters an unsuspecting enemy in cold blood for the sake of a few head of cattle. A man may be a good Roman, though he condemns his own sons to execution. A man may be a good Red Indian, though he tortures his victims at the stake; just as a man might be a good Hebrew, in the days of the Judges, though he sold his daughter into slavery.[1] To judge a savage by European standards is as unintelligent as it is unjust; and the native who decks himself in a few cast-off articles of European clothing and adopts what he understands to be the white man's customs, or even the white man's religion,[2] may very well be the worst rather than the best of his tribe. Instead of asking whether a savage obeys our laws we have to consider what is his attitude to his own. We must not blame him if he has not learnt to follow our light; perhaps

[1] See Exodus xxi., 7.

[2] Such natives are often mistaken, by travellers and others, for native Christians in the true sense, to the very unjust prejudice of the cause of foreign missions.

he has never seen it; but we must not refuse to praise him if he is faithful to his own.

Now, in the cases which we have hitherto examined, that light is what we have described as loyalty, or the recognition of the social bond. Further, it can be nothing else. Without such loyalty, tribe and individual alike would soon cease to be, and virtue itself would perish because there would be no one to be virtuous. Such loyalty is essential to the existence of mankind. Abstract it from any virtue which occurs to you, and what have you left? How much of the substance of truthfulness or chastity or honour will remain if there is no bond between you and those in whose presence, real or imagined, and for whose sake, you meet and resist temptation? Each virtue will become a cold adherence to a formal rule, which is either mechanical and habitual or else self-interested and commercial. If we do not "speak the truth in love," we shall have hard work to steer between the Scylla of priggishness and the Charybdis of turning our conformity to morals into a way of gain.

But at this point we shall be challenged more seriously, and from two opposite sides. We shall be told in the first place that this tribal or social loyalty is by no means a primitive sentiment, but an artificial product; that the history of morals begins with the far simpler impulse of self-gratification, and that wherever this impulse appears to be absent it is really there under another form. In the second place, we shall be asked if we have not forgotten the existence of pure unselfishness; only within the limits of altruism can goodness be maintained; and any sentiment of loyalty which

has not learnt to distinguish between what I want and what others want, is but a preparation for goodness and not goodness itself.

Against both of these objections we must proceed to make some reply. Our assailants have already faced one another on many a battlefield, and we may be excused from discussing the views of individual champions on either side. Both contentions, however, enjoy wide popular favour, and our own interpretation of goodness would seem to be opposed to the one as much as to the other. Let us turn first to what is generally known as egoism. Egoism has always claimed to be founded on a secure and indisputable psychology. Everything which we include under the name of conduct, it argues, is the product of the instinct to satisfy our own desires. For our desires we are not, save indirectly, responsible ; we are furnished with them when we start our life ; and we have no choice save to seek to satisfy them. All depends on the manner of their satisfaction. We may satisfy one desire only to rouse others, more imperious and less easily allayed. Or we may satisfy a desire only to find it speedily demanding a fresh satisfaction. Or our means of satisfying a desire may bring upon us the resentment and opposition of other people, and the pleasure we secured for ourselves will be replaced by pains inflicted from outside. We must, therethere, learn to satisfy our desires wisely.

For example, if we are weak, though ravenous, through prolonged fasting, it would be foolish to invite desease by overburdening the enfeebled stomach and by eating our fill at the first opportunity. If we have strong animal passions we should do ourselves no good, in a civilised com-

munity, by defying decency or the policeman at their behest; we must keep them within limits if we are not to lose altogether the pleasure to which they point. If we are brought into contact with want or pain, our desire for ease and a peaceful conscience will go unsatisfied unless we set ourselves to play the good Samaritan; while, by doing so, we discover that we are satisfying another desire, of which we had possibly till then remained unconscious. If we believe in a future life, with its rewards and retributions, we shall obviously do the best for our desires by seeking to save our own souls.

On the other hand, the egoist continues, what is apparently unselfish has its root in this same self-regarding attitude of mind. The instinctive and unreflecting clan-loyalty of the savage can claim no other origin. The things which he does are what his neighbours approve. They are also the things to which he is accustomed, and which he prefers; and he knows that he would be made to feel very uncomfortable if he did anything else.[1] Thus the egoist has no difficulty in accounting for the presence of morality and religion alike in our conduct; and the same line of reasoning enables him to show that what is praised as disinterested is really egoistic. The soldier, the philanthropist, the statesman, and even the martyr, are taking their own several ways to gratify their own desires, and the inconveniences or pains they endure are merely the price of the particular desires by which they are moved. Any other course than that which they are actually taking would fail to satisfy them—else, why are they taking it at all?

[1] See p. 106.

This point of view is often stated by its opponents with some degree of ridicule, as if its falseness were self-evident. As a matter of fact, this is far from being the case. The egoist's question is not easy to answer; and even if his opponents know how to refute his contention, a very large number of people have failed to comprehend the cogency of the refutation. "Here stand I," said Luther; "I can do no other." What he meant, urges the egoist, was that he was willing to do nothing else. He chose the life of protest just as definitely as the gourmand chooses the life of self-indulgence. We might almost call Luther the wiser and completer egoist of the two. For while the gourmand has his hours of repletion and even pain and nausea, the consequences of Luther's protest only produced for him a deeper and sterner pleasure; and students of church history know how the martyrs actually welcomed the flames to which they were condemned, as the Hindu woman welcomed the funeral pyre which made her "sati"—a *good* woman—in the eyes of the world.

We must not even stop here; unless the virtuous man rejoices in his virtue, can he be really virtuous at all? If I attend religious services on Sunday when I would rather play golf or sit at home reading the luscious report of a divorce case, I deserve no credit for my attendance at church. The only difference between the non-church-goer and myself is that he prefers the direct satisfaction of a game or a book, and I choose something which can only be obtained by putting it on one side. If the fear of arrest and imprisonment alone keeps my hand out of my neighbour's pocket, or my pen from imitating his signature, I have no advantage

over the thief, save, perhaps, in prudence or timidity.

Such a line of argument again brings us very near to paradox; or rather, to the teaching of the gospels. When it tells me that, before the moral law, I shall be judged by what I like rather than by what I do, it is really unanswerable. When it deduces from this that if I am good, it can only be because I like being good, and would far rather be good than bad, it is equally secure. But the argument is false, for all that. We are not concerned, at the moment, with the usual refutations of egoism —the obscurity of its doctrine of desire, the half-heartedness of its psychology, its confusion between the desired and the desirable, the inconsistency with which it tells us we *must* choose the pleasures that are most certain and lasting, and avoid the pleasures which will give pain to others. We have rather to show that the whole conception of the interests of the individual, as applied by egoism, is open to serious objection.

II. On the face of it, nothing appears more obvious or more sadly familiar than selfishness. It may be stubborn; it may be ineradicable; to doubt its existence would seem to be sheer folly. Directly we begin to ask, however, what is meant by selfishness, we are met by difficulties. How shall we define the selfish man? The man who habitually thinks only of himself, and puts his comfort or pleasure before that of everyone else? Or shall we say that he is habitually led by his own desires, without regard to any restraining considerations of morality or the opinions and expectations of other people? The two suggestions are by no means identical. The selfish man, let us say, is led by his desires.

But are we not all led by our desires? Does anyone do anything that he would rather not do? I may easily find myself in circumstances where I shall choose a course of action which, at other times, I should never think of choosing; but this does not alter the fact that, at the time, I am doing what I desire. "But you may be outraging morality by so acting." I reply, Whose morality? Yours, or my own, or some third person's? You may think my action wrong, but to me it may seem entirely defensible, while I may have my own doubts about the value of something that you call moral. To the Pharisee, morality meant the refusal to heal a man on the Sabbath day; to Jesus, such a refusal was the very essence of immorality.

"But you must take into account what other people expect of you." Who does not? The thief and the saint alike are guided by the opinion of their fellows; and the body of opinion which supports the thief may be larger than that to which the saint defers. On the other hand, if I am bidden to respect the opinion, not of my own "set," but of everyone, I reply that you are asking of me an impossibility. On what points of conduct has such an opinion ever been expressed? If you tell me that killing a man in cold blood and robbing a man of his wife are universally condemned, I shall be willing to admit that the vast majority of civilised people at the present time concur in this condemnation; but I shall add that the judgment of the human race, even as to these actions, has not always been unanimous.

Moreover, it is extremely doubtful whether an act which was universally condemned would ever be performed, by a sane person, except in the

heat of passion or some other bewilderment of the brain which amounts to temporary insanity. The swindler and the prostitute may be defying other people's public opinion; but they know that in their own society their conduct is regarded as normal, and that success in their plans will be hailed as praiseworthy. It has often been observed that members of the criminal classes see no harm in their depredations on society. Society is an organism with which they are at war; and in war all is fair. Even outside the ranks of professed criminals it is often very hard to persuade people that the actions and ideals which their habitual associates regard as justifiable are really wrong. To hold that it was disgraceful to be drunk would, in many circles, even a generation ago, have been looked upon as the opinion of a fanatic; and the most respectable travellers will relate with pride their exploits in outwitting customs officials at Liverpool or New York. If, therefore, we regard selfishness as the satisfaction of desires pushed to the defiance of universal conviction as to what is allowable, we shall find it very difficult to prevent our list of selfish actions from shrinking almost to vanishing point.

But surely, it will be replied, there must be some definite standard of right and wrong. A selfish action is not the less selfish because a number of misguided people happen to be ready to applaud it. Dick Turpin or Claude Duval were not the less criminal because their exploits were the admiration of all the lesser highwaymen of their time. And the destruction or pillage of an enemy's property in war is not the less wicked because most civilised opinion has united to call such conduct heroic or

glorious. To say this, however, is to surrender the original contention. Why should the opinions of one set of persons be negligible and those of another set important? Only because one is conceived to be right and the other wrong. That is to say, your condemnation of certain actions has nothing to do with the approval of certain classes of people, however respectable; but only with some inherent correctness in those opinions, and some equally inherent evil in the actions themselves.

We turn then to the first suggestion, that the selfish man is one who thinks only of himself, and puts his own comfort and pleasure habitually above that of other people. But how many people do this? It is true that occasionally there is found an Ishmael, with his hand against every man's, and every man's against his; but the rarity of the example is as conspicuous as the example itself. Again, it is true that there are certain needs which each man has to satisfy for himself; and we do not think him selfish for providing the means for their satisfaction. We do not consider a business man selfish who puts the success of his own business first, and does his best to secure all possible orders for himself and not his rivals. We only condemn him when he does this in an underhand or deceitful fashion, or breaks some recognised rule of commercial conduct. If the apostolic precept, "Look not every man on his own interests, but every man also on the interests of others," is disobeyed every day in the commercial world, it is on the structure of the whole of our commercial system that the blame must be placed. But the blame is none the less real. Such a precept cannot be neglected with impunity.

Again, the interests of the individual are often

the interests of the individual's circle; the trading company with which he is connected, his political party, his family, his club. What strikes the observer or the injured person as selfishness may be the very antithesis of selfishness; devotion to a cause from which the individual as such may have little or nothing to gain. Even an Alexander Borgia or a Fagin will have his allies. The keenest and most relentless employer of labour, ready to dismiss a servant for the most trivial of faults, often makes the most indulgent and self-forgetful father or benefactor; and he will even put on one side the plain interests of his own business to be loyal to the interests of his class and his fellow-employers. When Shakespeare describes a man who owns no ties whatsoever, like Richard III. or, in his later career, Macbeth, to whom treachery and murder pave the way to a success which can be shared with no single person, he has to contrive some singularity of bodily shape or supernatural suggestion to make such moral abnormality credible; and the abnormality strikes us as a kind of human disposition which is akin to madness, and it is punished with an isolation whose horror madness itself could not surpass. Even a Sir Willoughby Patterne, accused of scheming for the happiness of others, as he understands it, in order to minister to some secret gratification of his own, comes to be regarded as something repellent and portentous.

It must not, of course, be supposed that if selfishness, as the strict pursuit of individual interests, is thus seen to be exceptional, its opposite, unselfishness, is therefore to be regarded as comparatively common. Had Macbeth made his wife his partner in every one of his schemes, or hurried

to her side in her last darkened moments, we should hardly have called him unselfish ; perhaps it would be equally impossible to use the term of the dreaded commercial magnate who flings away his money in lavish gifts to charitable societies, or devotes his spare hours to amusing his children. We have simply been concerned to show that egoism, if it means the opposition between the individual and his surroundings, either in his reference to standards of conduct, or in his pursuit of his aims, occupies a very much smaller place in life than has often been supposed. The opposition is rather between different sets or circles, larger or narrower, more or less reputable, with which the individual in one way or another may be connected. If, therefore, we are told that our view of morality, as springing from some instinct of cohesion or tribal loyalty, is fundamentally false, because it conflicts with the fundamental egoism of human nature, we can only reply that we have not discovered that thoroughgoing egoism save as an exception, and that, on the other hand, cohesiveness and partnership have shown themselves to be the rule. We cannot derive morality from a state of mind which, for the majority of human beings, as a normal condition of their consciousness, does not exist.

III. We have therefore, in the next place, to consider the alternative contention. "Morality means the entire forgetfulness of self ; unless this has been attained, we are simply in bondage to our own desires or pleasures." Or, as others would put it, "morality consists in obedience to the command of duty, without any end of our own to be gained thereby. Otherwise it is but a prudent or a hypocritical selfishness." The altruist is in

agreement with the egoist in believing in the existence of individual interests and aims, as distinct from those of all other people; the difference is that the altruist does not regard such aims as the only possible motives for action, but would have them extirpated, and would set in their place the happiness of others.

We have already seen the difficulty involved in accepting the element which is common to both creeds. There is equal difficulty in understanding what is meant in seeking other people's interests in opposition to my own. If that is the meaning of unselfishness, it is hard to believe that anyone has ever been unselfish. Can I act in opposition to my own wishes? Does not the very fact that I am seeking the interest of others show that I am identifying my own therewith? When a mother, let us say, flings herself out of a moving train in the attempt to save her child, is not her joy in the child's life as her joy in her own? When the patriot risks exile or death for his country, has not he united all his ideals and hopes with hers? Many altruistic moralists, it is true, go further than this. "Be unselfish," they say, "if you wish to be happy. You will only gain satisfaction by refusing to seek it; devotion to your friends, your employers, your subordinates, your town, these alone will bring it." Precisely; "if you wish for happiness"; but is not that the very formula of the egoist? So then the altruist himself is only aiming at happiness after all; and he is only aiming at his own happiness—that impossible quest; for if he meant the general happiness, his formula ("if you want happiness, don't seek it") would be entirely wrong. It is precisely the general happiness that

I *am* seeking, when I devote myself to the interests of my town, my employers, or my country. This backstairs altruism, which promises us a Heaven in the future if we can only deny ourselves sufficiently in the present, need surely detain us no longer. The good man can do without such altruism as this.

It is the inevitable paradox of ethics that altruism will always turn out to be egoism unless it ceases to be the service of others "for their own sake." The true altruist (though most teachers of altruism would hardly receive him) finds as much satisfaction in the happiness he wins for others as if he had gained some end (were that possible) in which no one else had any portion. The student of the gospels is well aware that the self-sacrificing of Jesus did not consist in his preferring the redemption of humanity to his own life, but in the unalterable decision with which, at whatever cost of shame or agony to himself, he united his own joy with theirs. As we have already discussed this point, however, we need not elaborate it further. We may be content with replying to the altruist that, like his opponent, he is making a demand which common experience will not allow us to grant; and that love to my neighbour is not only consistent with my search for my own happiness; without that search it is unintelligible.

IV. But surely, some one will say, there is another view of the root of morality; what is to be said of duty? Are we not conscious of a command which is crowned with a majesty far outshining any considerations of happiness, another's, or my own? Now, to suggest that duty is not the first and last word of ethics might seem as dangerous as it is ungrateful.

And indeed some of the noblest words ever spoken have been in praise of that "stern daughter of the voice of God." But, on consideration, duty will be found to stand side by side with the altruism that we have already discussed. To many people, duty is summed up in the law of unselfishness; and the greater part of the civilised world has no higher conception of duty than the august word which bids us love God with all our might and our neighbour as ourselves. It may be pointed out that the first part of this command distinguishes it from the familiar altruism which would seem to be implied by the second, and on which we have now made up our minds. This is true enough; but the Christian knows that love to God is not a mere act of homage to a formal principle of duty; it is the warm outpouring of the soul to Him outside of whom no happiness is possible or indeed conceivable. In other words, love to God means that I do not repudiate the idea of reaching my own satisfaction (which is impossible); but that I identify it with the satisfaction of the ruler of the universe. Nor will it be forgotten that as far as the Bible is concerned, love to God is regarded as impossible apart from self-identification with my neighbour, his needs and his happiness.

On the other hand, if I am not to regard the imperative of duty as synonymous with the great command that sums up the law and the prophets, I shall have to find it in a certain moral necessity to exhibit truthfulness, honesty, self-respect, and the other virtues. But whence arises this moral necessity, and who is to decide the extent of the demands made upon me for these several virtues? And why, when this is decided, do I obey? Why,

also, do I sometimes disobey? There can only be one answer. I have received my ideas of duty from my surroundings; I obey them, not for their own sake, but because I am, or wish to be, a part of those surroundings; this I do, either at the behest of common prudence—for the same reason as that for which I eat my food and do my business—or because, acting in harmony with the views of conduct around me, this is the only thing which satisfies me. Of course, as we reminded ourselves a moment ago, I may not perform what other people consider my duties; I may impose upon myself, or allow my own society to impose upon me, a set of duties which most other people would consider not to be duties at all. Our present argument is that what we call the categorical imperative of duty is not really ultimate; it makes its appeal to a higher authority; and by that higher authority the words of its appeal have been given to it.

Kant himself practically admits this. His whole account of the categorical imperative is based on the fact that we are rational beings; that we are bound together in a community of reason. Hence, the formula which he gave to the imperative, "act so that the rule of your action might become a maxim for all rational beings." Kant might be interpreted as looking upon human beings as so many equal yet independent atoms in a molecule. But both psychology and physics have pointed out that atoms, though they may be equal, are never independent in a state of nature; their very *esse* is to act in common; to be parts, in fact, of a molecule. And the newest physics (and shall we add, the newest psychology?) suggests that the atoms themselves (to say nothing, for the moment, of the

electrons) are simply centres of one single all-pervading unity of force. That is to say, duty bases its commands to us on the fact that we are members of a community; and it never could be obeyed were we not already prepared to act as members, to be true to the larger whole of which we are a part.

We do not wish to say anything disrespectful of Kant's formula; we acknowledge the majesty of its comprehensiveness; but when it tells us that the law of any action of ours ought to be fit to be the law of all men, it is really reminding us that the only society with which we can ultimately or satisfactorily identify ourselves is a society which includes the whole universe of human beings. But let all this be forgotten; let us begin to talk about duty for its own sake; let us imagine that truthfulness or chastity or honesty could be considered or cultivated apart from this warm identification of ourselves with our fellows; and what pharisees or prigs we should become, wrapping ourselves in the cloak of our own virtues, and bidding others stand off from persons so much holier than they. And into what quagmires of casuistry shall we not be led; asking how mad a person must be before we decide that we need not tell him the truth; or how strong a desire or passion must become before we conclude that it would be unnatural to restrain it; or how many times we are to persist in forgiving our brother; or according to what rule our brother must be made to divide the inheritance with us; or what are the things that we must render unto Cæsar and what unto God. Such questions can never be answered; or rather, no one would think of carrying out their answers; if we attempted to do so, the very ingenuity or perplexity of the

answers would lead us to take the course which passion or self-indulgence might direct.

V. It thus appears that neither selfishness nor unselfishness, in any form in which they can be put before us, can give an adequate account of goodness. Each of these great principles, under one or other of which the majority of ethical theories in the past have grouped themselves, leads simply to questions which cannot be answered. What then is left save to combine the two? Each has proved unworkable, simply because we have regarded each as isolated from the other. But each is wrong, only in so far as it is understood to exclude the other. Each is right, when it includes the other. Nor is this a mere paradox; it is not wrong to do what I like; it is only wrong to do what I like when others with justification dislike it. It is only possible for me to do what others like when I, too, like it. But to say this is to find ourselves on ground which has already become familiar to us. Both egoism and altruism (to use these overworked terms once more) are based on an individualistic interpretation of human nature. They assume that my interests are opposed to those of other people. That opposition I may maintain; or I may strive to overcome it. But it is there. And the moral law which bids me struggle against it affirms it as powerfully as does its rival.

But to allow this individualistic interpretation is to make a fatal mistake. Goodness is essentially a social affair; just as man is essentially a social being. He is not an egoist, because he constantly and cheerfully subordinates his own convenience and happiness to that of others; he is not an altruist, because—whatever he may imagine

—he never really denies himself. Wherever human society exists, this attitude must necessarily be found within it. How else will society be possible? For society is not a mere matter of addition. It is an organism, a system of men and women, and these are something more than merely like one another in various principles, important and unimportant. In spite of all rivalries and clashing interests among individuals, classes, and sexes, the members of society are faced by the same dangers, and compelled to make their homes within the same geographical limits; they have the same thoughts, they are animated by the same desires, the same loves and hates.

Society indeed is built up, as Aristotle said, out of the *oikos* or household, upon the principle of *Koinonia*. It is a vast partnership. We are indeed unfortunate in having no better word than "partnership" by which to translate the majestic Greek expression. Our own word suggests the carefully delimited and often distinctly suspicious terms of a commercial alliance. The Greek is equally capable of all the warmth and vigour of our word comradeship. Κοινὰ τὰ φιλῶν. *Koinonia* means a sharing, both of external or material goods and internal dispositions and conceptions of values. Such a sharing, inevitable in some form whenever men live together, becomes positive goodness when they resolve that the best things they know or possess shall be brought under its rule.

Some such partnership is observable in every savage community. As a matter of fact, the partnership often appears far closer in primitive than in developed societies. But a more careful sociology will perceive that in the latter, however

relatively strong individualism may have become, the things which all share are far more valuable than they can be among savages—the gifts of literature, the creations of art, the inheritance of architecture, the ideals of patriotism, the hopes and glories of religion. But to see the partnership at its best, we must look for it within the family. And to understand its functions and possibilities, we must interpret them in terms of the family. The family, as we have seen, transforms tribal comradeship into personal affection. The wife depends upon her husband in a completely new way when she leaves the women's camp to live with him; and the husband is far more dependent upon his wife when he no longer spends all his time in the men's club-house. The narrowing of the sphere of interest within the limits of a single household means a corresponding strengthening of the claims of the family; and affection, when it is born in the family, means something it can never mean otherwise.

The very word "brother" is unknown until the family teaches it; and when once taught, it reacts upon the life of the whole community. It typifies the duty to one another of individuals, who now know themselves to be members of a greater family. And affection means care and pain and strange new joy and the mysterious stirrings of sympathy and a vision which stretches beyond the bourne of this life; it is the mother of the conception of immortality; it binds together the past and the future; it speaks of an eternal existence. From such lessons the State is quick to profit, until it is itself a teacher and nurse of morality. For the State now becomes more than an aggregate of actual living men, in which each individual must

fight, or think, or serve, or triumph ; it is the mystic centre of a thousand memories and fears and hopes ; it is the medium of communion with the great ones whose bodily presence is seen no longer ; and it gives to its children a wider consciousness of action, since not for the present only, but also for the future are intended alike their sufferings and their victories.

This must always be the case. Humanity, and even that part of humanity which shares our citizenship with us, is too large, too vague, to do more than incite to a temporary enthusiasm, if we are left alone with it. For in all life, except the most primitive, to think of our fellow-men is to think of people whom we need, as they need us ; but it is also to think of people who get sadly into our way ; who often look at us with scant interest or courtesy, and whom we should very much like to see altering their conduct to us ; who persist in asking more for what they are selling than we like to pay, or who are tantalizingly slow to discharge their debts.

At moments of great national hope or danger we can feel ourselves to be of one spirit with them. Even in the vulgar joys of some military success, we can fall upon their necks and allow an otherwise repellent intimacy ; or when the news of some great disaster falls upon us, we can look into their eyes and draw silent thoughts and inspiration and courage from thence ; or we can learn with them to pour our offerings cheerfully into the common fund. But that is only for a time ; the need of making our own ends meet resumes her sway ; and those, whose companionship made us feel that we were larger than we knew, become once more strangers and rivals. By the very complexity of society, society is defeated. The poor

man begins to hate the rich, and the rich to despise the poor; equals look with suspicion on one another; and that fellow-feeling which we found to be the soul of goodness disappears in commercial competition or political partisanship.

Whence shall it be restored? How is it that society, aged and complicated as she is, still holds together with pathetic persistence? How is it that justice, which the Roman poet two thousand years ago imagined to have just left the earth for good, still dwells in our midst? Firstly, because goodness is natural; that is to say, in spite of the force that tends to fling us at each other's throats, we cannot help finding in each other allies as well as foes. Secondly, because both in social aims and ideals and in the larger issues, whether of religion or national danger, or in the great new opportunities of progress that face us from time to time, we are welded together anew; and thirdly — and this point is of most importance—we are all members of families. We learn the true meaning of social life at our mother's knees; we learn obedience and co-operation and reverence for common ideals from reverence to parents and elder brothers, at every stage of our growth. In the family we see, as can be seen nowhere else, that attitude which is neither egoism or altruism, but something deeper and higher than both.

Moralists have long been accustomed to point to a mother's self-scarifice for her child, or a father's self-denying toil for his family. When they do so, however, they show us how misleading the term self-sacrifice really is. Is it not rather self-fulfilment? Did not every man and woman who applauded the act of Ivan Ivanovitch know in his heart that the

mother who was alive, was really slain—had sacrificed herself and offered herself up, so to speak, on the altar of personal safety? Had she clutched her little ones to herself, and opposed her own breast to the cruel fangs, she would then have been asserting herself; she would have remained to the end what she ideally was. And so the father who puts aside his own tastes and hobbies, his own enjoyments with his friends, or even the demands of a weary body, to toil for his little ones or play with them, is really asserting himself—announcing to all the world, that is, that he is a father, and chooses to be such, and repudiates the idea of being anything else. And yet even this is not quite true; he is not asserting himself so much as asserting that for which he seems to sacrifice himself. He does not say to the world, I am a father; but rather, This is a family, a little group of human beings, for whom it is a joy to labour, and in comparison with whose happiness nothing else matters at all. The very qualities and characteristics by which the State or community is preserved can only be produced and maintained in family life.

It is out of such an attitude—the perfect flower of family life, but impossible in its fulness elsewhere—that the other virtues are able to grow. That loyal affection of which we have spoken, which makes the shame of another bring a blush to my own cheek, which makes me look into the eyes of men with a new pride when someone I love has done a fine thing, is the womb from which all love of truthfulness, honour, and chastity are born. Even the self-regarding virtues can have no existence unless I have learnt to regard, not myself, but "our self." Prudence and foresight and self-

control are merely the cold steel weapons of private efficiency and success, until they are drawn in the service of the family group; while personal purity is simply an obedience born of a traditional and customary rule of self-restraint, until it is seen to be the corollary of my attitude to those who are nearest to me, and my reverence to them and to myself. Then each takes its true shape, as an angel of light or as a vision of the eternal.

VI. A somewhat similar theory of goodness has recently been worked out by Professor Royce in his "Philosophy of Loyalty." Royce appears to place loyalty where Kant placed the imperative of duty, or perhaps we should say the good will. "In loyalty, when loyalty is properly defined, is the fulfilment of the whole moral law. . . . You can truthfully centre your entire moral world about a rational conception of loyalty. . . . You can be loyal only to a tie that binds you and others into some sort of unity, and you can be loyal to individuals only through that tie. . . . By a cause adapted to call forth loyalty, I mean, for the first, something which seems to the loyal person to be larger than his private self, and so to be in some respect external to his purely individual self." Hence, the true principle of moral life is, "be loyal to loyalty." "All duties which we have learned to recognise as the fundamental duties of the civilised man, the duties which every man owes to every other man, are to be rightly interpreted as special instances of loyalty to loyalty." And further, "religion is the interpretation, both of the eternal and of the spirit of loyalty through emotion and through a fitting activity of the imagination."

No one can read these passages from Royce's book without responding warmly to the spirit of chivalry (if I may use the term) which animates his words. Emphasis upon the importance of loyalty is needed very strongly in our ethics; and Royce may be taken to have made out his case when he shows that the performances of what we call common duties are really instances of loyalty to persons, or to a cause lying behind them, equally with those great deeds which mark the summit of human excellence. But it is not easy to find in loyalty the original spring of all virtue, unless we either widen the term considerably beyond its common acceptation, or narrow it almost to a shadow of itself. We can recognise as loyalty the faithfulness of a clerk to the interests of his firm, or the obedience of a Homeric common soldier to the capricious commands of Agamemnon or some other shepherd of the people; and loyalty will always be a conspicuous characteristic of the more developed virtues of mankind. But the word hardly seems applicable to that elementary and groping obedience to usage and traditional restrictions which, as we have seen, stands for morality in more primitive societies. Doubtless, we have there the seeds of loyalty, or loyalty in embryo; but loyalty itself denotes something far too conscious and explicit to be usefully applied thus.

The difficulty is still greater when we turn to Royce's ultimate maxim, "be loyal to loyalty." The words themselves challenge thought; but it is safe to say that they correspond to nothing in the mind of a savage, or indeed of anyone but a philosopher. We are loyal to persons or to things which we associate with persons, like flags, long

before we can begin to be loyal to abstractions; even a cause must be represented by something concrete before it can make an appeal to all save the few. The value of Royce's opinion lies in its contention that we cannot deduce the moral life from obedience to a bare imperative or an intellectual conception of duty; that morality springs rather from the consciousness (going far back into the mystic regions of instinct) of a personal bond with other people; and this consciousness, as we have seen, arises first in the tribal or horde life, and then takes shape and definiteness in the family, to be communicated thence to the society once more.

VII. If, then, we may trust our argument, the family as an institution must always be necessary. It is the mother of the virtues which make society; the armoury from which alone can be supplied those weapons by which the foes to the life of society, selfishness, suspicion, and self-assertion can be combated. Whatever weakens the family, must weaken the State. If the family has now come to be looked upon with suspicion or disfavour by social reformers, it is because the family in its true sense, as regards certain strata of society, is ceasing to be, or is presenting us with the form apart from the spirit. If the State would preserve her own existence, she must do all in her power to stimulate the life of the family, lest, losing the fruits of its healthy activity, she lose also her own sustenance and strength. Losing this, she will also lose the chance of genuine happiness for her citizens. Many will deny that the State has any business to think about happiness. She may ensure the tranquillity which is born of the absence of violence within her

borders; she may strive to protect her members from foreign aggression; she may even take thought for securing, by means of graded and progressive taxation or like measures, the better distribution of wealth. If she goes beyond this, they say, she will only meddle and blunder. If, by the State, we mean the legislator and the magistrate, such an opinion has some show of truth. But the word may mean much more than this. If we refer to the great pulse of national life, throbbing in every artery of commerce, friendship, or religion, embracing all, fed by all, and greater than all, then the State can be satisfied with nothing less than ministering goodness and happiness to every part of its great organism.

Are goodness and happiness, then, identical? Are they even connected? Many a moralist has asked this question with a trembling suspicion that they are not; and that his followers will be called on, ultimately, to decide between them. If we are right, however, there can be no doubt about the identity. Goodness does not lie either in seeking happiness or despising it. It is happiness. For in goodness, as we have come to understand it, is the only entrance of peace into a man's life. It keeps the desires in their due place; it calls forth the warmest outpouring of friendship and affection—the joys that bring with them no sorrow, or a sorrow that is turned into a mysterious satisfaction. It unites the heart as no narrower ideal can hope to do; and it summons the witness of all history to glorify and crown the sacred emotions which guide the tender feet of the child and inspire the heroism of the patriot and the unwearying holiness of the saint.

Whether we think of goodness, or of happiness, we come sooner or later upon the convictions of the mystic. The mystic has ever lived side by side with the philosopher, though strangely aloof from him at all times. With his " here and now," he is a perpetual challenge alike to the metaphysician with his emphasis on the distinction between what is in time and what is out of time, between becoming and being, and to the evolutionist, with his dream of an age-long process to a goal not yet conceived. The mystic claims to be there, to have reached the timeless, already. Some grave critic will quote St Paul (himself one of the greatest mystics who ever lived) : " not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect " ; would we dare, he will ask, to make a boast from which the greatest of the apostles always shrank ? But the truth is that he did not always shrink from it : or perhaps we should say that while he repudiated the boast he affirmed it. " To me, to live is Christ." " Your life is hid with Christ in God." What is this but the daring mysticism of " here and now " ? St John is more explicit. Love and faith and obedience *are* eternal life ; and the man who possesses them walks with God. God comes to him and " sups with him."

Nor could the evangelist claim to consider the possibility of a greater happiness than this. Even the millionaire goes down to the grave knowing that he has missed many a cup of delight, and lost many a longed-for prize. Even the saintly ascetic, trampling on the ashes of one wayward desire after another, knows at the very last that there is some secret lust whose fires are yet to be quenched, some height of virtue still to be attained. Before the goal is

reached, the trumpet sounds, and the games are over. But to him who has learnt to live in others, for whom goodness means loving his neighbours as he loves himself, counting neither his leisure nor his livelihood dear unto him if he can serve them by sacrificing it on the altar of their needs, rejoicing in every thought or hope, every action or suggestion that makes it easier for them to love one another, there is no tedious struggle to a far-off joy. His cup is full. In time, a larger cup may be given him. But he could not enjoy, or want, more than he has.

> "To see a world in a grain of sand,
> And a heaven in a wild flower,
> Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,
> And eternity in an hour."

Blake was right. Eternity can be held in the palm of the hand. The function of mysticism is to keep the eternal before us in our earthly life. Such goodness knows that life has nothing worthier to offer. "He who is content to find all his satisfaction in God, hath enough." If, in spite of all the horror and bloodshed and greed that have stained the records of modern as of ancient history, and in spite of all the waste and squalor and wickedness of to-day, the Christian claims that this experience is actually mediated to him through Christ, it is because, as he would say, such goodness as this is not a thing, nor an attribute, but a person—*the* Person, the Son of God, the all-great and the all-loving, the redeemer of mankind. If, on the other hand, we have found the beginnings of this goodness, at the very dawn of human history, in the vague gropings after the shadowy customs of the

tribe, purposeless, cruel, or, to our minds, even hideous, it is because that soul of goodness is also the Son of Man, who is found wherever one savage draws near in clumsy trust or affection to another, or ignorantly and instinctively lays down his pleasure or his life for his friends.

CHAPTER VII

THE LESSONS OF BIOLOGY

I. Our examination of the family and its place in the history of human society and conduct has led us already over a wide field; yet there would be some who would have us travel yet further. Man, we are told, is a part of the whole animal world. Like the animals, he possesses a body; like theirs, that body is moved by strong and deeply rooted instincts and desires; nor can he, for all his pride, draw any clear line even between his mind and theirs. The laws that govern his conduct are only special developments of the laws that govern theirs, and neither with him nor with them can the action of the mind be understood apart from the body. Herbert Spencer would go so far as to give the name of "conduct" to the activities of animals as well as human beings; and many who would shrink from this use of the word would still admit that neither psychology nor ethics must ever expect to shake itself free from biology.

These are considerations which we cannot afford to neglect. They remind us that if, at one end, the study of the family ascends to the highest realms which humanity is capable of reaching, at the other it must condescend to the study of the matings of the higher mammals and other living creatures, controlled or uncontrolled by man. Along the most recently trodden paths of biological specula-

tion we shall hardly need to travel. The eager study which has been devoted of late to the germ-cell, the perplexing process of union between two parent cells, and the complicated problem of the bearing of histology in general upon the problem of heredity will fortunately lie outside our scope. The broad question we have to answer is, Does the study of animal life throw any light upon our view of the beginnings of human society and the origin of the family?

Some may reply that such a question is superfluous. What have the animals to do with the matter? It will be seen, however, that many arguments have been drawn from the animal world; and if man is a member of this world, we cannot safely consider the species without bearing in mind the genus and testing our conclusions by that wider study. Others will perhaps suggest that we are introducing this question at too late a stage. Why, they will ask, did we not begin with the infra-human world? The answer is that to do that would have been an unsafe proceeding. We must beware of being misled by the animals. We can observe them, but all observation must be from the outside. That is to say, all observation is interpretation. If we must argue with circumspection about the mind of a savage or even of a child, how shall we argue about the mind of an animal? All valuable investigation proceeds from the more familiar to the less familiar. The shrewdest of our generalisations about the animals are only pieces of clever guess-work. Can we even prove that animals are not automata? Whatever we conclude about them, our view of human society must rest on other foundations. That view, how-

ever, may be either more or less in harmony with what the animal world seems to suggest to us about itself; and if it is more in harmony rather than less, we shall feel the more at rest about our previous conclusions.

To begin with, as far as all but the lowest species of the animal world are concerned, without dual parentage there can be no offspring. To state this is to find ourselves at once in touch with the previous chapters. For this dual parentage at once supplies us with the materials for the simple family, father, mother, and child. Not that wherever dual parentage is found there is necessarily anything approaching to the family; the father (as in higher levels of existence) may leave to the mother all responsibilities for the upbringing of the young; the mother herself may be able to leave them to shift for themselves from their earliest days, or she may even, as in the case of most insects, be absent from the hour of their birth.

But among the higher animal species not only is there dual parentage, but without some parental care there can be no survival. The young must be secluded, protected, taught. For all this, the mother's activities alone may be sufficient; but only seldom is this actually the case. The higher we ascend in the scale, the greater is the mother's own need for protection; and though the father generally acknowledges few duties to his offspring, he must keep by the mother and her young, until the young are able to look after themselves, or mother and young alike would run the risk of being sacrificed to their dependence on one another. We have here the explanation of the mutual constancy of males and females in the wild state. It is absent

in domestication, where protection is secured in other ways, and it is absent where the species is wholly gregarious, when the mother is sufficiently protected by the conditions of her existence in the pack or herd.

But we can go farther. Without undue anthropomorphism, we can say that this parental care implies some measure of what we may venture to call affection. In some animal unions, indeed, such affection is unmistakable and almost human. And, dangerous as it is to argue from human beings to animals, it appears to be a law of all higher animal life that some physical attraction is felt by most living beings for both the creatures and the places with which they are connected; and constant and sometimes unremitting service, such as the male may have to render to the female during the helplessness of the young, even if it is instinctive, cannot be altogether unworthy of the name of emotion. "In the gregarious habits of many of the higher animals and in the family life of others we find that the unconscious germs of the altruism on which society rests are present along with the instinctive egoism all life implies." [1] If, indeed, that school of psychologists is correct which holds that what are popularly imagined to be the signs of emotion are really instinctive responses to some external influence—that these "signs" themselves cause the emotions they are supposed to betray—we could in that case regard this necessity for service as the nurse, or the mother, of paternal and marital affection. Be that as it may, the normal result of doing something for another is to be drawn emotionally towards the object of our beneficence, and, except

[1] Ward, W., "The Realm of Ends," p. 364.

for the saints among men, such service would never continue long apart from some amount of affection. The affection itself becomes the cause of further permanence and constancy, and what may have had its origin in purely physical circumstances and necessities may now and then give to even animal life something of the dignity of what is generally regarded as the property and the glory of the human species.

II. But there is another feature, common to all animal life, which calls for notice. The more helpless the young at birth, the less fertile the species. In the case of fishes and insects, for example, the young have no need for the parents' care. The roe of the fish contains legions of eggs; but the eggs, from the moment they are fertilised, are left to themselves. In the case of many insects, the due provision of food for the larvæ is made by the mother, and the mother herself, in many instances, dies before the egg is hatched. In ant-colonies and bee-hives the female has nothing to do but to lay the eggs, which are tended by the other members of the community, themselves really sexless. It is obvious that the young, at least in the first two cases, run enormous risks, and if correspondingly large numbers were not produced, the species would rapidly come to an end. As we ascend in the scale, however, we notice a steady change. Birds and mammals produce only a few young at a time. But these are all protected till a certain age is reached. In fact, the size of an animal, its relative infertility, and the amount of care and food needed by its young, would seem almost to vary in direct proportion. The more energy needed in preserving the offspring, the less the parent is able

to spare for their protection. The elephant produces but one elephant child a year.

But with parental care, as a rule, goes parental training. Simply to feed and guard the young would be but a poor kindness. Ignorant human parents may be guilty of such folly; nature never is. The cub or the whelp must learn to live its own life, but in so doing it is bound, at least for the time, the more closely to its own parents, as they to it and to one another. And further, the mother alone gradually becomes unequal to this complicated task. True, the actual education of the young may be a matter for her unaided genius. But since, for some time after the birth of the young, the larger part of her attention and strength must be expended in one definite direction, nature exhibits fatherhood as well as motherhood; and the association between the sexes, prolonged after the actual mating, as if in anticipation of future needs, lasts on again after the birth of the new generation.

Along with relative infertility and infant helplessness goes permanency of union. And what do these three characteristics suggest but the family? True, mother-love, among animals, is far more conspicuous than father-love. The protective instinct of the mother with young is as passionate as the desire of the male for the female, and far more permanent. But father-love is there, and few things in nature are more wonderful than the gradual development of the momentary desire for sexual gratification into the long fidelity to its objects and its results. Nor will the marvel be diminished if we attribute it to natural selection. It is possible that originally only a few species manifested this father-love, and that they and

their mates and offspring survived while the rest perished. Still, the father-love was there. Its survival and wide extension through the animal world as it exists at present do not take from the significance of its appearance.

Thus, as far as nature is concerned, all biological development seems to point to the family or the clan as its goal. In the case of gregarious animals, we see the clan principle ;[1] the mother, of course, must nourish her own young, but fatherhood is a minor affair. The weaker members of the universal society are protected by the society as a whole. With non-gregarious animals (and it is here that we find, among the mammals at least, the higher intelligence and skill) the position of the father grows steadily in importance, and family union may for a time be as close as in an English village.

Family life, then, is an end ; that is to say, it is a phenomenon which appears as development reaches relatively high levels, and which has been slowly prepared for throughout earlier stages of growth. As the species grows more highly co-ordinated, its surroundings combine to elicit and preserve those actions and aims which, when carried across the line into human life, we call the characteristics of the family. For all, then, who regard that line as continuous, the conclusion will be quite near at hand that there was no stage in human history when the family did not exist, and that to attempt to break up those relations of interdependence and mutual interest, care and service, on which

[1] Sir F. Galton ("Inquiries into Human Faculty," 1907, pp. 47 ff.) fully recognises this gregariousness, *e.g.*, in herds of oxen, but attributes it to a blind instinct, resulting from strenuous natural selection, and not to any sympathy between individual members of the herd.

all families, rich and poor, must rest, is to try an experiment against which nature is one long and solemn caution. No anthropologist has yet been found to suggest that human society began under any circumstances in the least similar to that of animals under domestication; and though certain primitive societies, as in Central Australia, may be spoken of not altogether inappropriately as hordes or packs, it is just in them[1] that the distinctions of kinship, both male and female, are most carefully preserved. Between a camp of the Arunta or the Kurnai and the indiscriminateness of a herd of buffaloes or a pack of wolves there is no analogy whatever; while, if we look at the animal species most closely allied to man, the quadrumanous apes, the biological characteristics of the family, relative infertility and the prolonged and joint care of offspring, are unmistakable.

III. But does not this appeal to nature prove too much? If nature calls for mutual help and self-effacement, laying the burdens of the weak upon the strong, she also calls for qualities of another type. She provides for the ruthless extermination of the weak by the strong, and in this fashion and by the ceaseless struggle for the means of existence, too scantily furnished ever to go round, she sets a premium on a selfishness that dare not think of others. The price of continued presence at the meagre board is the steadfast determination to shove away the other guests, however worthy and definitely bidden. No species can hope to survive unless its less capable and agressive members are rigidly prevented from perpetuating their

[1] See p. 62.

inefficiency by their living rivals and the destructive forces of nature around them.

Such is the theory of natural selection as it has often been presented by its hastier and less thoughtful admirers. And it has recently been transferred into the world of ethics by the philosophy of Nietzsche and the imposing figure of the superman. Life becomes one long gladiatorial combat, and human excellence is only to be won, as the Turkish Sultan used to win his throne, by the slaughter of all possible rivals. *Vae Victis!* It is hardly necessary to say that Darwin himself and his allies and disciples never stated the theory in this uncompromising form. This fight for life, with reddened tooth and claw, assumes a very different aspect when looked at dispassionately, either in the meadow or the jungle. In the first place, even if it exists, it is not, save for a few carnivora, conscious. There are certain dangers which beset all life, vegetable, animal, or human. Every living thing protects itself from them with whatever skill or knowledge it possesses. The bird is found dead on the lawn, it is true, a victim to the sudden feline pounce of the cat; and the mature human being is stretched lifeless by the insidious attack of the cholera bacillus. The aged lion who has "greatly filled his time" retires into some solitude to die, as the aged human being, surrounded by weeping descendants, or committed to the tender mercies of a pauper nurse, sinks into the grave. Except in a strained and unreliable metaphor, however, there has been no struggle for existence at all. The bird does not fight with the cat, any more than the strong active man engages in mortal combat with the bacillus. And though Heracles, in Euripides' play, forced

Thanatos, or death, to "stand and deliver," no one consciously challenges old age or draws the sword against a fatal accident.

Even for the carnivora, of whom Tennyson was doubtless thinking in his dangerously felicitous phrase, the struggle is not a conscious one in the human sense. The tiger and the bear are not moving on a perpetual war-path. They have thrown down no gage to nature or to any part of it. When not driven by the pangs of hunger or desire, or roused by some new and perilous element in their environment, they are, like other normal creatures, at peace with all the world.[1] The mediæval doctors were more correct than is often supposed when they taught that it was man's greed which introduced strife and bloodshed into Paradise. The state of war in the animal world cannot even be compared to that which is entered by the business man who knows that, in the modern phrase, he must either "get on"—rise on the shoulders of defeated rivals—or "get off"—suffer commercial defeat himself. Even when hunger—and hunger is not "sport"—leads to the "kill," and the lion's paw strikes down the grass-eating giraffe or bullock, some kindly principle of nature seems to dull the sudden and unlooked-for pain, and, as Livingstone began to feel when himself attacked by a lion, a violent death is transformed into a euthanasia.

But the term "struggle for existence" is also ambiguous. With whom is the struggle? With the members of other species? This is what most people understand by the struggle, but we have already seen how little truth there is in the con-

[1] See, for example, some of the striking photographs of "wild" nature in C. G. Schillings' book, "In Wildest Africa."

ception. Biological science, however, has generally meant something else. The most determined rivals, it is pointed out, are members of the same species. They range over the same grounds; they feed on the same objects; and they suffer from the same diseases and dangers. Only a certain number will be able to survive. The real foe of the tiger is the stronger tiger; of the deer, the fleeter deer. Now, if this means that members of the same species actually fight with one another, it is ludicrously untrue. Anything like cannibalism is practically non-existent in the animal world. Animals as a rule only exhibit active hostility to one another in the mating season; at other times the combats which take place between creatures of the same species are mostly playful. Nor do they generally seize food from one another except in sport or under much provocation.[1] At worst, they leave one another alone to forage for themselves.

But does not this of itself imply a struggle? It may, if we can use the term of a struggle that is not consciously waged, and where neither hate nor fear is ever felt. To assert that the less active and nimble will perish soonest in a time of drought or scarcity needs no great scientific acumen or wide experience. It is the consciousness of the struggle that we are concerned to deny; only a consciously waged war can substantiate the assertion that nature protests against mutual help and care. So far from nature's doing this (if we may continue to personify her, as the biologists so often do), she constantly binds the individuals of her species into great herds. There, when there is any lack of

[1] The sudden raids for crumbs which starlings and sparrows make on one another can hardly be considered to constitute a serious exception.

food, the members of the herd never think of quarrelling with one another; but the whole herd will migrate, and survive or perish as one.

The so-called struggle for existence, as far as it is imposed by nature, and not induced by man, does not call for savagery or hostility at all. Instead, it stimulates caution, foresight, and mutual help. Its dangers can only be guarded against; they cannot be fought. The fury of combat would be the very last thing to aid a creature in preserving his life. If it was upon such weapons that the existence of a species depended, how could a single sparrow have survived the secular enmity of cats and foul weather? The battle of the birds is fought and won when the nest is being planned, built, and made the scene of a hundred patient and joyous ministrations. Nor can any one who has ever watched the life of wild animals confuse caution with timidity, or watchfulness with fear. The rabbit running down his hole when he feels your footstep approaching is no more miserable with fear than you are when you leave the shelter of the trees in a thunderstorm. If you say that the gazelle is frightened because she looks at you for a moment with her large wistful eyes and then bounds away, you might as well say that the city man is frightened of motor cars because he looks up and down before cautiously crossing from the Mansion House to the Bank. The struggle for existence, as nature sets up the lists, will never breed the overbearing and relentless super-man. It asks but for the comradeship, the confidence and the steadfast affection which are at once the glory and the defence of the life of the family.

IV. In the second place, it is a mistake to suppose

that either physical or mental excellence can be attained or preserved by anything so simple as the mere device of weeding out the unfit or the less fit. Such methods may be suitable enough for the cattle-breeder who selects the most promising young males to be the sires of the next generation, and dooms the rest, ultimately, to the butcher's mattock. But nature knows no such rough and ready classification into suitable and unsuitable. Creatures are not born either fit or unfit, either weak or strong. They are born plastic. They have the materials for strength and fitness, and for the opposite. To kill off all who do not obviously reach a certain standard of efficiency would be sheer wastefulness, and nature is never guilty of this. Doubtless a great proportion of every species die before reproducing themselves; but this number will generally include quite as many of the strong and venturesome as of the weak and timorous. Strength and venture-someness, indeed, are apt to lead to danger and death. And does anyone suppose that the fishes' eggs which are eaten before being hatched, or the larvæ which are devoured before the time has come for their transformation into insects, would make the least useful members of their tribe, or are suffering for the absence of gifts which have been bestowed upon their more fortunate brethren? The actual elimination of the "unfit" is and can be of only relative importance.

The real struggle is not to eliminate the unfit but to make them fit. All the higher animals are amusingly unfit at birth. It is this unfitness, combined with their readiness to imitate, to learn, and to practice, which constitutes the charm of puppies, cubs, and babies, just as power to supply

the need and take advantage of this readiness is the source of the true grace of fatherhood and motherhood. Nature is no stepmother to her children. She does not provide for her huge family by the destruction, deliberate or fortuitous, of a certain number of its members. True, they do not all reach a good, or weary, old age. Some die before their powers are worn out; some before they are matured. *Abstulit clarum cita mors Achillem.* But nature, as Aristotle sagely remarked, does the best she can with her materials. When all the cross-results of accident and the thousand chances of life are put on one side, as affecting the unpredictable fates of individuals, those who perish are, in the long run, the less adaptable rather than the less adapted. The struggle for existence is really the struggle for adaptation. But on the lower biological levels adaptation means co-ordination; on the higher levels it means co-operation as well, and co-operation in its most efficient form, co-operation between kinsfolk, animal and human. The race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. The prizes of nature and life have never been gained by a solitary and unsocial Cyclops. The wary and long-tried Odysseus, patient and true to wife and home, is the real survivor in the combat.[1]

Let us, however, give all due weight to the argument from natural selection. Let us admit that by storm, pestilence, and all the thousand dangers of the jungle, the river and the plain, nature effects, in the clumsiest fashion, what the breeder accomplishes by his own drastic methods, and thereby somehow keeps

[1] Many illustrations of this argument will be found in Kropotkin, P., "Mutual Aid."

the species from deteriorating. It will still be a mistake to suppose that, by this proceeding, nature spells progress. *A priori*, we should doubtless expect progress; and the theory of natural selection, as usually expounded, is understood to imply it. But we do not find it. The breeder is forced to admit that beyond a certain pitch of excellence he cannot pass. He is always foiled by infertility or a disappointing "throw-back."

And in nature, for the most part, there is little progress. Whatever their past history, most species are stationary at present. Individuals reach their full-grown powers, and then decay and die. The species maintains its level, and no more. If we may judge from the works of contemporary artists, themselves no mean craftsmen, the lions hunted by Tiglath Pileser and Assur-bani-pal seem neither more nor less ferocious and muscular than the creatures which the African traveller shoots to-day. Even man, as far as his body is concerned, has altered little since the days of the Elgin marbles, the pre-historic tombs of Egypt and Syria, or the caves of Neanderthal and the Dordogne. Nor does a sudden access of stringency and severity in the conditions of life produce any corresponding physical advance. In times of famine and plague, both in the animal and the human worlds, the strong and victorious survivors of whom we are sometimes told, rising amidst the dismal wreckage of the unfit, are nowhere to be found. Instead, the weakened and stunted beings who happen to escape the fate of the rest proclaim that their progeny will probably show still more degeneracy. A relaxation of the conditions of the fight—if fight it can be called—is the only thing that brings some

returning hope. We do not look for the most vigorous specimens of mankind either among the snow-bound hovels of the Esquimaux or the rocky and barren lairs of the Hottentots.

What does suggest progress is a set of conditions that calls for the healthy exercise of hitherto dormant powers. Then, the eohippus will start on his long career of development into the modern horse; and the rabbit, transplanted to Australia, will exhibit capacities for leaping which would amaze his stay-at-home cousin. The changed surroundings are responsible for the difference between the town and country mouse. And when these surroundings favour the reproduction and the preservation of the young, when they reward an earnest search for food, a tireless exercise of muscles and a watchful care over the weak, a degree of progress is the result which rapine and carnage would never have achieved.

All this is pre-eminently applicable, however, to human life, since in human life alone is there a conscious response to the summons of environment.[1] Docility, indeed, is not confined to the human race. The most widely diverse species of animals are accustomed to proceed by the method of trial and error, and they gain considerably in speed and precision of action as the process is repeated. But that mysterious possession which distinguishes the lowest of men from the highest of animals turns what might be thought to be only a difference in degree to a difference in kind. The animals react; man responds. With him foresight and co-operation, once suggested and induced, proceed to clothe

[1] Man's "unused powers, in the direction of adapting race to circumstance, are more considerable than might have been thought;" Galton, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

themselves in ever new forms. He does not simply repeat the satisfactory device; he extends and develops it. Among the most infertile of living creatures, and certainly producing the most helpless young, he exhibits, even in the desert and the slum, the lowest death-rate of any living species. With him, as with his animal kin, progress has been by no means universal. A state of war has never been a means of advance. Savage tribes in constant feud with one another, or European nations who devote a third of their budget to war-like preparations, are simply building barriers in their own path. Human progress, which first became marked in the great river basins of the more temperate zones, has always followed the call for foresight and cultivation. Progress has appeared, that is, when it has been worth while to prepare for the future, to husband resources, to rear the young with care and affection, and to build and beautify the home. The stimulus to progress is the preservation, in its broader sense, of family life.

No one could seriously apply the popular view of Darwinism, a universal battle of all against all, to human life and conduct. The teaching of Spencer's "Data of Ethics," with its unreconciled juxta-position of sheer individualism and thorough-going collectivism seemed in places to suggest this. But against this the protest of Huxley's "Evolution of Ethics" [1] has abiding though crude validity. The truth of this statement can be gathered from the results of our fourth chapter. It is probable that the savagery and barbarity of primitive man has been greatly exaggerated. It is unsafe to argue from the savage's attitude towards the intrusive

[1] See p. 97.

stranger from another world to his attitude to his own fellow-tribesman. The very presence of a stranger in the country may be thought to be an outrage on the gods of the tribe. To kill him will be an act of piety. On the other hand, cannibals themselves have been observed to be strangely kind and peaceable. Travellers have often commented on the good nature of their savage hosts, when not roused to suspicion or reprisals, both where food is plentiful, as in the tropics, and very scarce, as in the Arctic circle.

Again, practices apparently barbarous have often a very far from barbarous reason. The blood feud is a matter of duty, in order to show due loyalty to clan or family, and to avoid the dreaded anger of the unavenged ghost. Infanticide is hardly recognised as cruel; it has often saved an immense amount of suffering; and it has been observed to come to an end when the food supply grows better or more assured. Even the killing of aged persons and widows is often acquiesced in, not altogether unintelligibly, by the victims themselves. All these practices, too, are found to be regulated by custom and tribal feeling. They may be cruel; they are often stupid. Sometimes, however, when the circumstances and dangers of primitive jungle life are remembered, they are curiously wise. The one thing they do not suggest is the desire of the strong to trample on the weak. On the contrary, the consciousness of identity of interest between the strong and the weak is remarkable. Between clans or tribes there may be no peace; between individuals there is no war. Quarrels there are; and they may be fierce. But most savages exhibit something of the child. A hot mood quickly passes. And when

a quarrel ends in death, the vengeance of society follows immediately. The blood of the clan has been spilt. It is the business of the clan to see that such an outrage is duly punished.

Biology has often been understood to describe the struggle for existence as if that struggle bestowed its blessings on the race by calling on the members of the race to fight each other and the outside world indiscriminately. It does nothing of the sort. The races that survive are all of them races that distinguish between their own kind and the rest of creation. None of the higher species could survive unless one parent at least were willing both to protect and to teach the offspring. Many species are able to be fruitful and multiply simply because they have learnt the lesson of gregariousness. It is certain that in the earlier stages of the development of the human race, the struggle for existence has never been indiscriminate. Man learnt to help his friends at least at soon as he learnt to hate his enemies. Unless he had done so, frost and flood and tempest, disease and famine, the snake, the cave-bear, and the mammoth, would soon have put an end to his existence. The foes which nature hurls against man can only be defied by a regiment, not by individuals. It is true that those regiments have often been very small, and very ready to turn their arms against each other. Then there has been a standstill, or regress. The common foe has profited by their divisions. The regions and periods of inter-tribal and international warfare in every continent prove this abundantly. There is no progress without peace. If science was ever minded to tell us that we could only plough our way to advance through the death of all save the " heights and pinnacles of

human mind" or body, we could but reply, so much the worse for science. We would rather do without progress. Men will go on protecting their wives and parents and loving their children, in spite of all the biologists' note-books.

But there is really no need to fear this solemn alternative—no affection, or no progress. There are certain imperious instincts that must be obeyed, certain powers that must be used. These keep the race alive. But they do little more. The other powers, born of kinship and human sympathy, turn life into good and worthy life. And as a man feels it to his interest to exert these more definitely, and sees that there are distinct chances of such exertion being rewarded, he will exert them. If parental love could do nothing to guard the children or arouse the affections, it would soon cease to exist. If industry and foresight and virtue shared one lot with sluggishness and malice, only the noblest men and women would ever do any work. That is why, in a time of plague, as Thucydides long since noticed, the ordinary virtues disappear, and men reveal themselves as models of piety or reckless desperadoes. On the other hand, when this use of the higher powers of self-control and comradeship by reflective human beings is felt to be worth while, it is difficult to assign limits to the result. Adaptation of oneself to one's environment merges into adaptation of one's environment to oneself. The choice of surroundings becomes their control and their creation. The cave gives place to the tent; the tent to the kraal and the hut; and in time to the mansions of St Petersburg reared on the cheerless snow-covered plains of Northern Russia, or the palaces of London which

grace the marshy banks of the sluggish and unlovely Thames.

Functions survive through the existence of opportunities for their exercise. They appear because they are already present in the germ. It remains therefore for any servant of his kind, in view of the plasticity alike of human nature, with its infinite response to its surroundings, and of those surroundings themselves, to consider what powers ought to be developed and under what conditions their use may seem worth while. If he understands the meaning of history, he will see that all true happiness has come, not from the absence of death, or pain, or work, or weak people to care for, or old people to cherish, but from the chance of success in dealing with each of the problems so suggested. By exhortation and example he will stimulate boldness in dealing with them; but he will also take care that the conditions of life shall themselves call for such boldness, and that human society, like the realm of nature, shall work in a definite manner to ensure that boldness does not lose its reward.

V. Our argument has carried us somewhat outside the sphere of biology proper. This has been inevitable when the appeal to biology has been made in order to influence our view of human life. We must now turn to another biological consideration, from which equally pregnant conclusions as to the laws of human society have been drawn. The higher, we have noticed, means the less fertile. As Spencer stated the law in the "Principles of Biology," "organisms multiply in inverse ratio to the dignity and worth of the individual life." Does not this suggest that nature, left to herself, will

defeat herself and destroy the very stocks she is at most pains to produce? Not only do the highest types of animals produce fewest offspring; of late years exactly the same thing has been noticeable in human society; the poorest, the least educated and provident, the least physically "fit," are prolific; among the professional classes, the eager business people, and the more intelligent artisans, the very sources from which the nation's real wealth is drawn, the birth-rate is slowly but very significantly and dangerously decreasing.

This is true of the whole of Europe, of the United States, and of our own colonies. For example, out of six classes in Harvard University, from 1872 to 1877, 634 persons married; in 1902 the surviving children numbered 1262; that is, the children of those marriages were just equal in number to the husbands and wives together. In the case of the graduates of another American university, in Connecticut, the average number of children to each marriage from 1833 to 1840 was 4.5; from 1841 to 1850, 3.3; from 1851 to 1860, 3.2; from 1861 to 1870, 2.6. In most of the chief European countries the birth-rate has steadily fallen during the second half of the nineteenth century, and the process has been continued since. In England and Wales the birth-rate between 1891 and 1900 was 30.0; in 1904, 27.9, and in 1907, 26.3; in France it has dropped from 22.1 between 1891 and 1900, to 20.9 in 1904; in Germany, from 36.1 to 34.1 in the same period; and in Norway, from 30.4 to 27.9. It is equally clear that the decrease is most marked in the upper and higher middle classes in each of these countries; and that the only fertile sections of society are the most uneducated and improvident. That is to say,

where the qualities that build up a strong family life are most in evidence, the population tends to be thinnest.

Whether the causes of this decline are mainly biological or not is at present uncertain. The analogy of the animal kingdom would suggest that some biological law is at work; and that as life grows more organised, and as energies are increasingly applied to making provision for the coming generation, fertility actually diminishes. It can hardly be denied, however, that something more than biology is concerned. This very desire to make provision for the future, and the wish to enjoy the present at the same time, means a dread of large families and a conscious and deliberate resolve to avoid them. The wish for a compact family becomes incompatible with acquiescence in a large one. The age of marriage is steadily rising in all but the lowest classes; and account must also be taken of the number of youths who find positions in tropical dependencies, and possibly, though paradoxically, of the general prolongation of life. This is really to take biology and transfer it into the realm of conscious choice. The economy which the body previously practised, the mind now carries out for itself. For the animals, nature assigns limits to the power of reproduction. For human beings, the mind sets up its own limits through a standard of family comfort and prosperity.

Manifestly, we cannot afford to lose the strength and backbone of the population of our country. If in those very classes, where the family principle is strongest, the ability or the desire (it matters not which) to perpetuate the family or the race is weakest, the family is itself pleading guilty to the gravest

of accusations. What is to be done? That some drastic measures are necessary seems self-evident. To leave the family to go as it pleases and give us more and more of the worst, and fewer and fewer of the best, is surely ridiculous.

The fear lest the wrong kind of individuals should be produced must be carefully distinguished from the misgivings inspired a century ago by Malthus. Then, over-population pure and simple was regarded as the danger. No country could support more than a given number of men and women. What would happen if private persons persisted in neglecting the existence of this natural limit? But, in spite of the support claimed for this position from the teachings of Darwinism, the stars in their courses fought against Malthus from the very beginning. That such a limit may be reached at some distant period cannot of course be said to be impossible. Theoretically, Malthus has not been proved to be wrong. But the rapid increase of population in this and other countries, right through the last century, coupled with a steady rise in general prosperity, wages, and the standard of life, reminded all serious thinkers of what history as a whole makes quite clear, that mere size of population has never been fatal to a country. "Latifundia perdidere Italiam"; it was by her overgrown estates that Italy was ruined. The downfall of the Greek states was owing to "oliganthropia"—diminution of her population—as much as to political and moral corruption. And, lest we should fear a general shortage of food supplies, modern scientific agriculture and the intensive farming of the cloche and the prepared soil, along with the experimental research in the heredity of plants suggested by the theory of

Mendel, have hinted that the possibilities of an acre of English land are far from being exhausted. That special dearth of quality rather than mere quantity in the birth-rate, which perplexes us to-day, had never been observed, and was not observable in the time of Malthus.

The relative infertility of the rich, indeed, is not a biological matter at all. Looked at more closely, infecundity is not confined to the richer or even the more comfortable classes in the community. Beginning to be noticeable about 1875, it has appeared in rural as in urban districts, among artisans as in the "servant-keeping classes." The only sections of the population which show no signs of it are, apart from the very poor, the Roman Catholics and the Jews; and in these two religious bodies the non-limitation of families has always been preached as a religious duty. Elsewhere, the decline in the birth-rate has been most marked just where, for economic reasons, the presence of large families is felt to be least desirable. The principle, if not the sole cause of the present continuous decline in the birth-rate in Great Britain is the deliberate regulation of the marriage state. The "devastating torrent of children," to use a phrase of J. Cotter Morison's, at least as regards three-quarters of the population, is fast drying up.[1]

There are equally grave reasons for doubting whether fertility and a low type of mental and

[1] See S. Webb, "The Decline in the Birth-Rate," Fabian Tract No. 131, 1907, where many of the figures are given, including a careful analysis of the returns from the "Hearts of Oak" Benefit Society. The burden of a family presses most heavily on the classes which ought to be most prolific; 25 per cent. of our parents is producing 50 per cent. of the next generation; and the author suggests that unless something is done to lighten this load the country may fall to the Irish and the Jews; or, "the ultimate future of these islands may be to the Chinese!"

physical development necessarily go together. The savage woman does not as a general rule bear more children than her civilised sister; the interval between successive births is distinctly longer than is usual in Europe; the difference is that the savage mother loses far more of her children in their infancy. Every village church bears witness that some two or three centuries ago the families of the well-to-do, and even of the rich, were quite as numerous as those of the poor. The high-caste Brahmins show no tendency to a dwindling birth-rate. Nor is there any ground for supposing that the biological law which gives to species which do not care for their young a fertility it denies to others, has any application to those districts of our towns where the infant birth-rate is highest, or the marks of infant and adult degeneracy are most numerous. The relative fecundity of the very poor, like that of the infecundity of other classes, must be explained in another way. Its cause is psychical and social rather than physical. It is the slum itself, rather than any mysterious element in the physique of its inhabitants, which must be held responsible for this disproportionate fecundity.

Let us figure to ourselves what life in a slum means for most of those who share it. Let us bear in mind the lack of social and domestic interests, the absence of any refined pleasures, the constant appeal of the animal instincts stimulated by the inevitable public-house, the close-packed dwellings, and the literature and art (if we may so apply the terms) which find their way thither; let us reflect on the lives of the women, where maternity, the house (hardly ever to be called a home), the factory, the funeral and perhaps the dram-shop and its

accompaniments are the only interests, and on the practical impossibility, amid uncertain employment and constant and ignorant poverty, of careful provision for any of the children before or as they come. We shall then be able easily to understand the recklessness, at once pathetic and perilous, of the very poor. The noteworthy fact is that as soon as some certainty does enter into a man's circumstances, and thrift becomes possible, the other set of instincts begins to assert itself. With the opportunity for the compacter family life comes the determination to secure it.

VI. But there is yet another aspect of biology which claims to be considered. More important than the number of children born is their character. And this leads us at once to the large subject of heredity. That the poorest and most forlorn inhabitants of Bethnal Green or Rotherhithe should have the largest families will matter little if their children are as healthy as the relatively few children born in Hampstead or Croydon. On the other hand, if parents physically or morally unsound produce unsound children, the outlook is exceedingly serious. Few questions are so involved and uncertain at the present time as the great question of heredity. It is naturally a matter of extreme difficulty to secure the really important data for any conclusions; and what is possible in this direction has hardly been attempted.

The very word, inheritance, is used in the most divergent senses.[1] It may mean the appearance in the child of what was congenital in the parent; it may mean the results, in the child, of influences

[1] See, for example, the "Report of the Royal Commission on the Feeble-minded," 1908, p. 181

exercised over it in its intra-uterine life ; or it may mean certain resemblances to the parent, physical or mental, whose origin is not clear, and which may have been acquired, physically, from one or other of the parents, or mentally through education, imitation, or early surroundings. Doubtless, all these kinds of " heredity " occur ; what is obscure is their relative frequency. In any case, the employment of one word for so many purposes is extremely unfortunate, and must make us very careful in coming to any conclusions of our own. The first kind of heredity, it will be seen at once, is the most serious, because least amenable to anything that we can do. The second and third are at least partly dependent on environment, if we give to the word environment a sufficiently wide sense ; and environment can be modified.

Into the detailed discussion of the many physiological problems connected with heredity, we need have no wish to enter. These are still matters for the specialist. It would appear, however, that certain broad generalisations are emerging out of the chaos of existing opinions and theories. First, acquired characteristics, in general, are not transmitted. A parent only hands on to the child what he has himself received. Second, a very large proportion of children, at their birth, even in the slums, are congenitally healthy, and only need wise and careful nurture—the last thing they generally find—to remain so. Third, the only hereditary diseases are those caused by the " racial poisons," chiefly alcoholism and syphilis.[1] Fourth, what is really

[1] Reasons for doubting the transmissibility of alcoholic degeneration were given in a communication from Prof. Karl Pearson to the *Times*, May 21, 1910, as the result of a series of investigations into the health and physique of the children of non-abstaining parents in certain elementary schools.

inherited is a strong or weak power of resistance to contagion; and this power may either be relative to certain diseases or to disease in general.

It is clear that these views are not entirely consistent with one another. None of them can be said to be proved beyond the reach of doubt, to be accepted universally, or to be applicable to every kind of disease.[1] There is a large divergence of opinion, for example, as to whether feeble-mindedness is always hereditary; whether it can result, in the child, from some other morbid condition in the parent, or whether it may even arise spontaneously, as the result of bad surroundings and privation in infancy.[2] But these differences need not greatly perplex us. In any case, the chief element in the problem is that which is the more open to human treatment, namely, the environment. For if racial poisons alone are hereditary, to purify the environment means to protect from the great majority of diseases which have been carelessly put down as hereditary and therefore unavoidable. If we prefer the other view, that a general inability to resist disease is inherited, contagious influences may be lessened, and so a good environment may neutralise

The criticisms of Dr Saleeby (*British Journal of Inebriety*, Oct. 1910) and Prof. A. Marshall (see *Times*, July 7, 1910) appear to show that Pearson had neglected certain fundamental distinctions in his investigations, and that nothing had been done to disprove the widely supported belief that feeble-minded inebriates produce their like, or the facts both of blastophthoria and ante-natal alcoholic poisoning.

[1] The reader may consult with advantage Thomson, J. A., "Heredity"; Herbert, S., "First Principles of Heredity," Doncaster, L., "Heredity in the Light of Recent Research," and more particularly with regard to the feeble-minded, Dendy, M., "Feeble-mindedness in Children at School."

[2] See the report already referred to, p. 185. The best authorities, however, are increasingly inclined to doubt whether feeble-mindedness ever occurs apart from an unsound general heredity.

a bad heredity ; the tendency to weakness of some kind or another may remain latent permanently.[1]

According to this view, it is the environment which determines what form the disease germ shall take ; it is the environment which determines whether it shall take any form at all. Here also, then, the slums rather than the inhabitants of the slums are responsible for a large part of the problem. If it is true, as Weismann has proclaimed, that acquired characteristics are not transmitted, and that the germ plasm is protected from at least the majority of outside influences, nature furnishes each generation with a renewed store of health and hopefulness, to make up for what has been squandered by the parents ; and where the evil characters are congenital, the maintenance of healthful surroundings will go far to keep them beneath the surface, and prevent them from injuring either their possessor or his neighbours.

But this view cannot as yet be called certain ; and, in any case, it must not be overstated. Nothing could be more subtle than Weismann's own interpretations and modifications as fresh facts have come to light. We may be satisfied here with stating simply that according to Weismann no characteristic can be handed on which has not affected the germ plasm or reproductive portion of the human organism. Certain poisons, however, can reach this germ plasm : and little as we know of the necessary conditions, their results may be reproduced. Some have found in the theory an argument for fatalism. If acquired characteristics are not transmitted, continued progress is impossible. Alteration of conditions is useless. A bad stock

[1] Compare Blagg, H., " Statistical Analysis of Infant Mortality," 1910, pp. 16-18.

cannot be improved. It can only be eliminated. But such an interpretation of the theory is an exact reversal of its real significance ; it overlooks at once the latency of much that is inherited, until matured by environment, good or bad ; and it takes no account of the predominant healthiness, previously noticed, of children at their birth.[1]

In any case, we shall have to deal with the "racial poisons," whether they are hereditary or not. But the isolation of this problem will bring it within easy and manageable compass. A sounder public opinion is already beginning to see that the hopelessly alcoholic and their even more miserably diseased brothers and sisters must be somehow prevented from perpetuating their corrupted race. There will always be others on whom vice and self-indulgence have not left marks so clear as to justify the strongest measures ; these, however, will be precisely the cases where we have good grounds for hoping that the disease will not be directly and completely propagated, and where, therefore, we may rely on a good environment, if it can be secured, to lessen the deep-seated evil. The cases which will be left after these deductions have been made will certainly be vastly fewer than those which perplex and horrify us at present.[2]

If, on the other hand, by the stroke of some magic wand, or the motion of an angel's wings, a stream of fresh air and cleanliness, sunshine

[1] For the influence of environment on what would seem purely congenital, see Fay, "Marriages of the Deaf in America," and Fishberg, M., "The Jews."

[2] We shall still have to take account of the possibilities so tragically described in Ibsen's "Ghosts," where the parent's disease, or crime, triumphs over the sanest training and the cleanest environment. These cases exist and have to be set off against the equally distressing cases where in the best families, and with what seems the best heredity, a "black sheep" appears, to the despair of his parents.

and privacy and confidence in the future could be wafted through these crowded scenes of all too numerous births and deaths, we might look for the same bright childhood and sturdy maturity that the race still exhibits in kindlier and less feverish and nervous regions. Instead of fecundity born of recklessness and mother of the most cruel form of waste, we should have that proud and tender care for a manageable family which may reconcile us even to a declining birth-rate. Even in matters of population, quality must rank higher than quantity. A declining birth-rate does not necessarily mean a decreasing population. Let the death-rate sink correspondingly; and though fewer babies greet the newly-entered world with a cry, and fewer mothers find all their energies consumed in child-bearing and child-rearing, there may yet be more children to play in our fields, and more healthy men and women to form houses and rear families of their own.

It thus appears that both the scope and the promise of eugenics are narrower than we have sometimes imagined. There are certain diseases of mind and body, indeed, as to which hesitation is fatal. To allow the insane, the syphilitic, or the tuberculous[1] to marry, is to commit what may be a grave crime against the bride or the bridegroom, and the whole of society as well. To allow the hopelessly alcoholic man and woman to drift from the gutter to the gin-shop, from the gin-shop to the prison cell, from the prison cell to liberty—if such a bondage to physical weakness and passion can

[1] Tuberculosis is not hereditary; but it is highly contagious; a single kiss may convey the bacillus; see Saleeby, C. W., "Parenthood and Race-Culture," pp. 179 ff.

be called liberty—and to the possibility of fresh parenthood,[1] is a crime greater than that of which the poor victims of our mistaken severity and equally mistaken mercy can ever be guilty. And in the higher ranks of society, what lover of his country would not rejoice if health and affection took the place, in the minds of parents and children alike, now occupied by money and position ?

But if we thus put obstacles in the way of the advance of undesirable persons to marriage, shall we not be interfering with the family in the most serious fashion ? If this be so, the family has been interfered with from the earliest times. The voluntary choice of the two contracting persons has never been really unfettered. Apart from the universal factor of parental choice, the savage has his rigidly defined marriage classes, the Hindu has his exogamous castes, the Mohammedan would shudder at the idea of wedlock with an infidel, and to the European a hundred considerations of age, religion, social position, education, and wealth have to be balanced unless public opinion is to be defied. If it were not for the frequency of such interference, the occupation of half our modern novelists would be gone.

Beyond all this, however, certain conditions are slowly coming to be recognised as positive bars to marriage. In Austria, parents and guardians may refuse consent to a marriage for want of adequate means, bad moral character, contagious diseases,

[1] Such parenthood is often quite independent of marriage. A considerable proportion of prostitutes are more or less feeble-minded. Dr Tredgold found that of the feeble-minded mothers under his care nineteen were legally married; forty-two had illegitimate children. See Dendy, M., "The Feeble-minded." A case is quoted where a single feeble-minded mother had given birth to ten children, four of whom were defective mentally, two more physically, and three had died in infancy.

and infirmities. In Servia, idiots, maniacs, complete cripples, and persons who are suffering from infectious or hereditary complaints (unless they can produce a special medical certificate), are prohibited from marriage. In the state of Michigan marriage with a person who is insane or afflicted with certain specified diseases is felony. In Connecticut, no epileptic or feeble-minded or imbecile persons may live together as husband and wife if the woman is under forty-five years of age. In New Jersey, again, certain diseases are specified, and for a sound person to marry anyone so afflicted is guilty of a misdemeanour. In England, the need of such legislation is being felt more deeply as the danger and burden to the community caused by such marriages is more widely recognised.[1]

Nor are such diseases the only barriers which science would place in the path of marriage and child-bearing. The perils of the presence of married women in the labour world have already been mentioned. No one has spoken more strongly on this point than the great eugenist, Karl Pearson. "The race must degenerate," he says, "if greater and greater stress be brought to force women, during years of child-bearing, into active and unlimited competition with men. Either a direct premium is placed upon childlessness, in a crushing out of the maternal instincts on which the stability of the race essentially depends, or woman has a double work to do in the world, and she can only do it at the cost of future generations." No one would say that maternity in the woman who is regularly

[1] Segregation of feeble-minded persons in industrial colonies is being seriously proposed, and would mean a far more merciful dealing with them than they experience at present.

employed in a weaving-shed is as dangerous as maternity in an inebriate or an epileptic. In view of what has been urged above with regard to the predominant importance of environment, many would refuse to share Pearson's fears about both classes of mothers. None the less, the children of the epileptic or inebriate, and the children of the women who toil like men, incur distinct dangers, and unless the State is to tolerate and to share those dangers, it must exert itself either to prevent such undesirable maternity or to neutralise its consequences.

This, however, is not to interfere with the family but to establish it. Eugenics, indeed, is of less value to the community than its allied science—if we may be allowed the word—eutrophics. Nature sees to the birth of the children. In the majority of cases she gives them to us with a thoroughly fair chance of health, both in body and mind. Their tending she commits to us. To inquire which is the more important, nature or nurture, is as foolish as to ask whether the machinery or the steam is more necessary to the locomotive.[1] Let us raise the standard of life, assist the weak and ignorant in that struggle for decency and health which almost all are or will be ready to wage, and rouse the sense of parental and family responsibility, and the question of fecundity will regulate itself. Let an instructed public opinion increase the penalties of merely selfish childlessness,[2] and we shall not have to bewail the sterility of our better classes. Let

[1] See Reid, Archdall, "Laws of Heredity," ch. xxii.

[2] On the possibilities of public opinion and the general feeling as to what should be expected of good families, see the concluding chapter of Whetham, W. C. D. and C. D., "The Family and the State"; the authors urge that large families among the competent should be treated as fashionable and praiseworthy, and that the desire for servants "without encumbrances" should be stigmatised as anti-civic.

us treat every life that comes into the world as a gift and a trust from heaven to parents and to the State, giving the fullest application, physical and moral, to Juvenal's sage words, *maxima debetur pueris reverentia*, and our sons will be like plants grown up in their youth, and our daughters like corner-stones polished after the similitude of a palace.

But what does all this amount to save the simple ideal of fostering those qualities which make the true and compact family? Such, indeed, is the real lesson of biology. In all life beneath the human level, co-ordination and persistence, strength and beauty, depend on care for the weak, co-operation between parents or members of the herd—the very qualities which come nearest to what, in humanity, we call moral. Above that level, the true well-being of the physical is only preserved by the moral, and the moral is that which is inseparably connected with family stability. The family is the point where physical nature leaves off, and where spiritual development begins. In all life, however, the end is present even at the beginning. We can see the preparation for the family in the laws that regulate the lowest species of life; and in the highest achievements of morality, the spirit is identical with that which binds together husband and wife, parent and child, in happy memories of the past, and in mutual confidence and sober-minded common effort for the future.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PRESUPPOSITIONS OF ECONOMICS

I. We now come to a division of our subject where we might well be expected to hesitate. Should we not look for evidences of the spirit of the family anywhere rather than in economics? Whatever we may think of the applicability of the principle of a common end or good, we must surely recognise that it has no place here. For in economics, alike in theory and practice, as we shall at once be reminded, competition is the very soul of business. Society cannot progress—it cannot even maintain its position—unless the individual holds his own interest and no one else's before his steadfast eyes, and secures the good of the whole by neglecting that of every one except himself. "Homo homini lupus." Whether we like the doctrine or not, the science of economics is supposed to tell us, we must confess that it alone is a true account of human nature and a safe guide to prosperity.

It must not be forgotten that economics, like every other science, is subject to change and restatement. The orthodoxy of one age is the heterodoxy of the next. No writer on economics to-day would be content with repeating or expounding the doctrines of Ricardo or Mill. In the course of two generations, politics, philanthropic sentiment, and history have modified some of these doctrines beyond the recognition of their authors. Yet no one can suppose

that the doctrines are really dead. It may be as unfashionable, in the sphere of economics, to say bluntly that private selfishness is public prosperity as it would be for a moral philosopher, following Mandeville, to assert that private vices are public virtues. But, in spite of that, the great majority of people believe, and the great majority of books assume, that competition is inseparable from commercial and industrial activity, and that the hand which succeeded in sundering them would open the door to degeneration, poverty and ruin.

If this is true, however, the consequences are undeniably serious. In their practical application, the principles of industrial competition and free contract were on their way to have destroyed the family over a considerable section of the population in the first half of the last century, if they had not been restricted by legislation. The theory underlying these principles, for one who believes in the primacy of the family, is even more dangerous. If the theory is true, he will have to admit either that the impulses which go to make up family life have no application outside, and that what makes the family destroys society as a whole, or, if he shrinks from such an opposition, he must admit that the family is founded upon a false view of life, and that the sooner it comes to an end the better.

In the present chapter, we propose to examine this theory.

How and when did it originate? We shall try in vain to affix the praise, or blame, of its discovery upon a single writer. It is rather the result of a number of converging tendencies of thought. Modern political economy is generally traced back to Adam Smith, and reflective writers have dwelt on the con-

trast between the genial temper of that philosophic Scotchman, with his attractive theory of the native power of affection and sympathy over the human mind, and the stern and unbending rigour of his economic theories. Unhappily, the "Theory of the Moral Sentiments" is almost forgotten; the "Wealth of Nations" is reprinted year by year. But the contrast is not really so great as is sometimes supposed. Adam Smith was far more concerned to protest against the interference of restrictive and so-called "protective" legislation with industry, than to clear an open field for competition. *Laissez faire* to him meant "abolish your navigation and corn laws, and your stupid system of taxation," rather than "leave men to fight out their economic battles among themselves and let the weakest go under."

In the fifty years which followed the appearance of Adam Smith's great book, a great change took place. The philosophic radicals, the industrial magnates, and the leaders of the operations of the financial world—a world which had hardly emerged from chaos in Adam Smith's day—developed his doctrine of *laissez faire* into *laissez se combattre.* Ricardo's "Political Economy and Taxation" may be said to contain the classic expression of the economics of unfettered competition. It was the application to industry and commerce of Bentham's "Principles of Morals and Legislation." Twenty years later, all the enthusiasm for personal freedom which inspired Mill's noble little work "On Liberty," was understood, by its author, to justify the presuppositions of the far more elaborate "Principles of Political Economy," a work which echoed Ricardo's language while it breathed a far more humane spirit.

Freedom was one of the battle-cries of the age when the science of economics was growing up. Utility was another. "Each man" (such was the fashionable creed) "is led by his own interest, and by nothing else." With this dictum, ethics and even religion had to square themselves as best they could. It came as the "felt need" to the economists. All the phenomena of the market were based upon it. Moreover, to them, only one "interest" was conceivable, that of making money. What else would make a man struggle so hard and ceaselessly with his fellows? And what else would allow of the formulation of laws and the utterance of predictions with anything like accuracy? Here at last was the "law of gravitation" for the new science of economy. "Let there be no sentimentalism" cried its professors; "we must be true to the facts of life; man is a money-making animal."

Thus, as Devas points out, the orthodox liberal economists based their system on the two assumptions that people are all like each other, and that they are all sharp men of business.[1] It must, however, be remembered that economics has never, as a science, been pursued in a completely academic and impartial atmosphere. Its conclusions have been too readily applicable to the immediate and pressing needs of its supporters, too dependant on hasty generalisations drawn from complicated industries, and too closely related to the discussions and projects of legislators. You cannot consider an abstruse problem with the necessary dispassionateness when the messengers of the Cabinet or the Press are waiting outside your debating chamber for decisions which are to be made the basis of a fresh

[1] See Devas, C. S., "Political Economy," pp. 647-662.

administrative provision or worked up into a new law. Thus, "while affecting the reserved and serious air of students," as Toynbee remarked, "political economists have all the time been found brawling in the market-place."

Another reason for the change from Adam Smith to Ricardo and his followers is to be found in the intervening sociological studies. Twenty-two years after the "Wealth of Nations," appeared Malthus' "Principles of Population." The connexion of Malthus with the biological advance of the century has already been noticed.[1] Still more close is his connexion with its political economy. The main contention of his book was that population always tends to outrun the means of subsistence, and that the human race is only preserved from starvation by being a constant prey to war and famine and disease. It was easy to draw from this thesis a far-reaching and startling deduction. In an age when diplomacy, science and commerce were beginning to combine to check the historic scourges of mankind, the struggle for the necessaries of life among populations now left to increase at the normal rate seemed bound to become increasingly severe. Humanity, as Malthus was thought to teach, and as the economists recognised, had been liberated from one set of terrors only to fall into another. Some fresh check on population was therefore imperative.

The final justification for the belief in this inevitable "struggle for existence" was destined to come from biology. Darwin, as we have seen, applied to the whole world of living beings the laws which Malthus had formulated for human society, and carried them forward to a conclusion which Malthus had hardly

[1] See p. 200.

contemplated, but which was already latent in the writings of the economists. All things, in the animal and vegetable world, tend to increase beyond the means of subsistence; granted; therefore, all life is an unending conflict, in which the stronger, the more adaptable and generally "fitter," survive and propagate their kind, while the weaker and less "fit" disappear. By this disappearance, as every breeder knows, the species is really the gainer; hence, the general conflict is actually the means of progress, and out of this "natural selection" of the better, and the rejection of the worse, comes the gradual and steadfast evolution of the race.

In this way the most eager optimist was presented with a satisfactory basis for the common conflict. "You cannot help this competition; prohibit it, and you will have no defence against starvation. But it is itself a blessing; it rids you automatically of the less desirable of your fellow-creatures; it preserves for you and for the future those whom you would most wish to survive." The value of the conclusions founded on the work of Malthus and Darwin has already been discussed. The immense mass of Darwin's observations, and the elaborate hypothesis as to the origin and reproduction of variations passed almost unnoticed, save in academic circles; popular interest centred round the question, "What is the effect of all this on the first chapter of Genesis?" And when that effect was at length seen to be comparatively slight, interest began to wane. No one thought of asking "What is the effect of such a view of nature as Darwin seems to imply upon the Christian conception of God and a divine law of love, and on the Christian theory of the fatal effects of strife?" Tennyson, it is true, had asked the question;

but that was before Darwin's books on the subject had begun to appear.

Similarly, but little attention was paid to the elaborate working out of the principles of supply and demand, the theory of the wages fund, and the other results of the economic studies of the day. Most people were content to take all this on trust, and comparatively few ventured to ask what was the relation of political economy, thus fortified by science, to the ethics of the New Testament. Carlyle and Ruskin had indeed done this with a trenchant and scornful eloquence which might have shattered a much more philosophical system of thought. But the public as a whole, which admired and applauded both these writers up to a certain point, was inclined to think that their resolve to look at both ethics and economics at the same moment was essentially wrong-headed. This attitude has largely continued up to the present time. "You cannot interfere with the iron laws of economics," we are told, "even though you have the Sermon on the Mount in your hands." And we have simply to conclude, in rather puzzled acquiescence, that God and economics are somehow at strife, and that our best course is to keep them from an open rupture by restricting each to a distinct sphere of influence in our allegiance.

II. But it is time to ask what has been the value of this general acceptance of the principles of economics. We shall find that the verdict of history is by no means so favourable as that of abstract speculation appeared to be. The most convenient years indeed for testing the principles of struggle and non-interference are those early years when the principles were being followed with whole-hearted

acceptance, the early years of the Industrial Revolution. To that page of history we do not now turn with any degree of national pride. It is true that the period which followed the discoveries of Watt and Arkwright and Crompton poured the wealth of the nations, for the time, into British pockets, and made us the bankers of Europe and the manufacturers of the world. They also gave us the means for sustaining the enormous burdens of the Napoleonic wars, and, incidentally, they made possible the Holy Alliance in Europe, the fifteen years of reaction which followed Waterloo, and the great seismic waves of revolution which swept over the Continent in 1830 and 1848. But they also meant the re-distribution of our population, both geographically and socially; the dislocation of our old social systems; the disfigurement of the country by hideous tenements and factories where sanitation was as much despised as decency. Worse still, they meant the degradation of thousands of men and women, pauperised by the enclosures, or forced to barter, for the hope of higher wages, all that could make life worth living. They meant the complete disappearance of family life in squalid regions where all, even expectant or newly delivered mothers, must slave from morning to night in the factory, with no law to restrict hours of labour, even for children of five or four years old; and with all this naturally came the growth of conditions of filth and ignorance and brutality where survival itself meant permanent enfeeblement of muscle and intelligence alike.

No wonder that the common sense and the humanity of the country refused to believe, with the economists, that all this was at once inevitable

and beneficial. The thing was felt to be a danger and a scandal; and the long-drawn legislative defiance of *laissez faire* began with the first of the Factory Acts. In 1802 the law forbade the employment of pauper apprentices at night, or for more than twelve hours a day, exclusive of meal-times, and made compulsory the provision of a certain amount both of instruction and of clothing. Naturally the manufacturers as a whole were indignant, and summoned the academic arguments of the economists to the aid of their representations that their profits could not stand such an interference with the legitimate practices of their business. And it must be confessed that the radical party in the legislature lent them considerable and valuable assistance. Little by little, however, their resistance was overborne, and the great British industries now cheerfully bear restrictions a tenth part of which, in the opinion of a century ago, would have sufficed to lay British prosperity in the dust.

The principle of unrestrained competition, however, and more particularly of competition between employer and employed, in spite of the successive blows dealt against it by an unscientific legislature, had one very important though wholly unexpected result. It gave birth to Chartism in England, and to Socialism on the Continent. The great Chartist movement of the later forties was in part a protest against the academic laws of non-restriction, in part a plea for their wider application. If restrictions were to be abolished, then let the restrictions which prevented combination among the workers be abolished also. If there was to be a fair field for all, then let the representation of working men in Parliament, beside that of employers, be made

possible. Whether as a defiance or a vindication of the principles of Political Economy, within thirty years the claims of the Chartists were all conceded ; [1] and the very name of Chartism is now dropping into oblivion.

It is otherwise with Socialism. Leaving on one side the various practical but unsuccessful attempts at establishing socialistic industrial communities, the founder of Socialism in the technical sense was Karl Marx ; and Marx learnt his system at the feet of Ricardo. Ricardo taught him that, by the laws of economic science, capital takes all it can from labour—in technical language, all the " surplus value of its produce,"—leaving to labour only enough to support its existence. Marx simply added the corollary, " therefore all that capital has obtained has been extorted from labour, and belongs to labour ; let labour arise, expropriate capital, and take back its own." [2] " A wicked appeal to class hatred ! " the bourgeois world exclaimed. But it must be remembered that it was not Marx, but Ricardo, who first, though unconsciously, set the interests of the two classes in antagonism. We may admit that the corollary of Marx is illogical. We cannot say that all belongs to labour, any more than we can say that all belongs to capital. But, for this deduction, the form of Ricardo's statement was as much responsible as was Marx himself. The correctness of Ricardo's statement is now generally disputed by economists. However that may be, if there had been no Ricardo, there might still have been discontent and hatred against the propertied

[1] The demand for triennial Parliaments was never seriously considered ; but its importance in the eyes of the Chartist leaders themselves was quite secondary.

[2] See Marx, " Capital," chh. ix., xxiv.

classes; but there would have been no economic socialism.[1]

III. The system of the academic economists must be credited with another serious result. Industry, left to itself, will always demand a certain amount of floating or casual labour. The growing stress of competition, we are often told, tends to make the demand larger and to increase the irregularity. Most people are now familiar both with the "seasonal" fluctuations of trade which offer a few brief and crowded weeks or days of employment at the cost of periods of inactivity lasting at least as long; and also with the "cyclical" fluctuations in which periods of "boom" and depression follow one another about every six or eight years. The supply of the "seasonal" demand means therefore the existence of a number of "under-employed" persons, men and women, who thrive, or else overwork themselves, in the busy seasons, and tide over the idle remainder of their working life as best they may. But under-employment means slow degradation of character; and the lesson of living from hand to mouth, or existing on the labour of others—wife or children—is learnt with fatal ease. Investigation, moreover, has shown that the most considerable reservoir of pauperism is this "stagnant pool" of under-employment; and paupers must in the long run be supported by the society which allows them to exist. Thus, free and unregulated industry, ranging over as wide a field as humanity will still allow to individual competition, inevitably creates

[1] Marshall has pointed out that the real value of Ricardo's work lay in his theory of currency, where but little harm is done by deductive reasoning. See also his "Principles," I. iv. 4 and 5. For a different view of Ricardo, see Devas, C. S., "Political Economy," pp. 418, 653, and Ely, R. T., "Political Economy," p. 322.

a burden for its own back ; and it is a nice question, which is more expensive, to decasualise labour, or to support the pauperism which casual labour produces.

But, after all, this is only part of a larger result. The maintenance of competition means the absence of organisation. And, as Ruskin said in his trenchant fashion, the present system forces us to endeavour to make one another poorer. Competition in modern industry means two things. First, a commercial man can never count on being able to give his undivided time and attention to the things which it is his business to produce. He has to keep one eye fixed on the other people who are producing the same thing ; and this, not only to copy any improvement they may introduce, but to anticipate them with any possible customer. Accordingly, any large and " well-organised " business has to support a small army of travellers, agents, and advertisers, none of whom ever produce anything at all, very few of whom are really needed to bring the goods to the notice even of the laziest or dullest of customers, and all of whom have to be supported by the business or rather by the members of the public whose payments keep the business going.

Secondly, when Messrs Smith, Jones & Co., by special business ability, have succeeded in driving Messrs Brown, Robinson & Co. off the field, all Messrs Brown, Robinson & Co's. employees, from their elderly skilled mechanics to their youngest clerks, find themselves thrown on the already overstocked labour-market ; their families must all go short ; and their savings will be exhausted, during their search for another place. Recent statistics have shown that such loss of work is one of the most fruitful as well as

one of the most melancholy causes of distress and of pauperism; while, at the same time, the employer's failure in business may mean continued worklessness or casual labour for the employees, long after the master has reinstated himself. We applaud the ability and resourcefulness of the victorious firm; we extol the system which makes such a victory possible; we forget the waste, the humiliation and the despair, which all such victories cost. The relieving officer and the workhouse are generally placed at some distance from the successful factory and the mammoth stores; but they exist.

No wonder that some critical minds, surveying the record of the competitive system, have asked, is it worth while? Of course, if it were only society which suffered, while the actual combatants gained, we might set off the concentrated advantages of the few against the thinly spread losses of the many. But this is not the case. For every victor there is a vanquished. Often, there are a dozen vanquished. Successful in one struggle, like the gladiator in the Roman games, the commercial warrior must immediately encounter another foe, and then another. The combatants who avoid actual loss are but few. Even the victors do not know when they too may fall. No advance can remove the possibility of a fatal mishap. And the very avoidance of such a mishap means suffering from the existence of those who have fallen. The fortunate beings who have reached the top, like so many weary Titans, must carry the burdens of their defeated rivals. Quite apart from the complaints of the increasing stress of modern competition, which are constantly heard when no change in our industrial system is being suggested, would not the prosperous owners of those gigantic shops be

themselves happier if they had not to bear so heavy an expense in the cost of poor-relief, and, in addition, to live in fear of the fate to which their own cleverness has doomed others? Must they not sometimes be reminded of the ruthless law of the grove of Nemi, and of

> "The priest who slew the slayer,
> And shall himself be slain"?

These remarks apply with equal force to the great co-operative stores; and their significance is not really lessened by the fact that by their very size they can introduce economies impossible to the small trader under the present system. Such economies simply enable them to fight their rivals the more effectively; and no personal delight in fighting can alter the fact that war is at best as wasteful as it is irrational. In one important respect, however, our principle that *laissez faire* prevents organisation is at fault. Competition between a number of small businesses tends automatically to produce a more strenuous competition between a comparatively few large ones. Unrestricted bargaining between individual employees and workmen tends to give way to the struggles between powerful federations of masters and men, extending over a whole industry. This introduces a new feature into economic life. The freedom of contract, which was supposed to benefit the community at large by keeping down wages and so, ultimately, lowering prices, is found to result, where the organisation of workmen is completed, in a cessation of work through an entire industry, till certain demands are conceded. Where the master's organisation is also complete, these demands will naturally, at least for a time, be refused, and the

community suddenly finds itself deprived of all its railway facilities or its coal; and the benefits of competition in lowering prices are lost, especially for the poor, as prices at once begin to rise.

Thus, in the case of a great modern strike, as in other aspects of competition, the irony of the situation consists in this, that whichever side wins, society as a whole inevitably suffers loss. As if she were some vast ambulance association, it is always hers to collect and tend the wounded, and to bury the dead; and when the shouts of victory are loudest, she finds her own shoulders most heavily loaded. In the great strikes of August 1911 and March 1912, the loss suffered by the trade of the country as a whole was probably far in excess of that suffered by either the companies or the strikers and their families. At such times the advantages of the system of free bargaining appear much less self-evident; and peaceful citizens, rudely despoiled of comforts or necessities, talk of driving insubordinate workers back to their labours, or forcing masters to concede the demands of the men.

IV. At this point we shall perhaps be met with the rejoinder that competition is not quite so universal as we have implied. Co-operation and alliance, we shall be reminded, have always played their part in the history of economic progress. We shall have occasion to illustrate and enforce this point later on. But its enunciation only strengthens the attack on the competitive system. For, if co-operation is admitted, how do we know that co-operation has not been the agent of advance, and competition its hindrance? The history of society seems to bear this out, inasmuch as it shows us groups of men animated by one common desire,

at first struggling with other groups, and then coalescing and uniting with them for the attainment of wider desires. Conflict has been constantly retiring before organisation. It is better, therefore, to inquire whether the presuppositions of the economic system, as we have examined them, are beyond suspicion. If they are, it is clear that we shall have to reconsider the claims made for the institution of the family.

"They must be; for do they not all follow from the great biological law of the struggle for existence?" They do not. For even assuming the correctness of the biological statement, the argument from biology, as far as economists are concerned, is only an argument from analogy. Before it will help us, we must know that the economic struggle is as inevitable as the biological struggle is supposed to be; and we must also be assured that those who survive are really the most desirable and valuable members of society. Moreover, as we have clearly seen, there are very grave reasons for doubting whether the Darwinian theory, if it is understood simply to mean competition between living things for the means of life, is an adequate account of the facts.

"But surely, biology apart, economic life must be a struggle?" This belief rests on two supposed axioms of human nature; that man is naturally greedy; and that man is naturally lazy. These are generally held together; and the defender of the competitive system assures us in the same breath that a man will always be trying to get the better of his neighbour, and that if you do not force him, on pain of want or starvation, to get the better of his neighbour, he will never do anything at all. But

it is obvious that these generalisations, thus crudely stated, cannot both be true. If one is true, the other must be false. As a matter of fact, psychology and history alike throw considerable difficulties in the way of both.

In the first place, the object of human ambition is by no means simply the acquisition of money. Many men are not ambitious at all, save for a quiet life and the things which they consider necessary to their comfort. Most people are wise enough to remember that money is only a means to an end; and most people, at some time or other, pursue ends which can only be gained by some other means than money. Love, anger, loyalty, ignorance, principle, religion, habit, will all defy that unswerving pursuit of advantage which is the economist's corner-stone. His calculations are upset alike by the trade-unionist who would rather starve than be a "black-leg," and the drunkard who would rather lose his situation than forego his glass; by the farm-labourer who will not take the trouble to acquire the lucrative accomplishment of thatching, and the shopkeeper who prefers a quiet little business in a village to the chances of a fortune in the town. They will apply neither to the philanthropist who will have nothing to do with a trade which thrives on sweated labour, however large its dividends, to the employer who will sooner refuse orders than recognise an organisation among his men, nor to the choleric person who will never do business with a man with whom he has once quarrelled.

History bears the same testimony. Religious passion, military enthusiasm, and the sheer love of novelty and adventure, have been the great angels

of the innovating spirit in every age. They have roused activities which the mere love of gain would never have moved. There is nothing commercial about them. They have been obeyed with equal enthusiasm whether they have meant almost certain loss, in the age of the Crusades, or whether they promised a possible gain, when men sailed with Drake across the Spanish main to dim Eldorados in the West. Any body of men, like the silversmiths of Ephesus, will fight if they see their livelihood being taken out of their hands. But we must not be misled by the action of chartered companies and commercial concessionaires in our own days into thinking that either individuals or crowds are stirred by the possibility of gain as they are by the prospect of loss. The first of our two axioms is certainly false.

On the other hand, the supposition that a man will do nothing save under the lash of the fear of starvation, or even of the loss of possessions or the failure of hopes, is equally destitute of foundation. It is nothing less than ludicrous to suggest that a man will always stop working as soon as he is assured of a satisfactory competency for himself and those dependent on him. The lowest savages equally with the most finished products of civilisation carry on numbers of operations which can by no conceivable ingenuity be said to increase their hold on any necessity of life whatsoever. "But will a man work if he has no inducement to work?" Of course not; he will not do anything which he has no inducement to do. But the number of inducements which influence men to work are as various as their characters. The student's love of investigation, the painter's joy in his art, the official's satisfaction in complete statement and detailed

organisation, the reformer's zeal for social and moral betterment, and the common man's acquiescent industry in his work because he has become habituated to it, or because this much industry is expected of him, are quite as real, and quite as common, as the desperate eagerness of the hired man, to whom necessity is always crying, "neglect this at your peril." Men of genius are proverbially poor, but their genius has not required the spur of their poverty. And, in spite of Blake in his South Molton Street tenement, or Weber in his Stuttgart garret, the best work has rarely been done unless it has provided its own stimulus, and laid on the worker its own necessity.[1]

All this makes us sceptical as to the respect really due to the "iron laws of economics." In spite of the repeated warnings of careful thinkers, we are all apt to confuse a "law" of science with a law of the State, and to imagine that, when once it has been formulated, it cannot be broken with impunity. The "laws" of economics are only shorthand statements of facts, so far as certain investigators have observed them. The observation may be incomplete; the statement may be inadequate. No science can hope to make progress unless it bears this in mind. Laws have just as much authority as the facts on which they are based have comprehensiveness, neither less nor more. And neither of the two "axioms" we have been considering, that a man will always aim at what is to his monetary advantage, and that a man will never work save under compulsion, can lay claim to comprehensiveness at all.

[1] It may be added that both Blake and Weber worked as energetically at times when they were not driven to work for a bare livelihood.

V. It would seem, therefore, that the principle of competition, disastrously as it has worked in many directions, is by no means founded on an unquestionably secure scientific basis. But no one can deny that its apparent strength is very great. In spite of psychology, Emerson himself has told us that we are all as lazy as we dare to be ; and is not our whole system of society built up on the supposition that if we want a person to do anything for us, he will only do it if he is paid ? Is not any employer who pays for piece-work aware that on any other arrangement his workmen will do as little as they can ? Is not the whole system of foremen and onlookers on the one hand, and inspectors on the other, absolutely necessary because of the conviction from which we can none of us escape, that no one, employer or employed, will work for a minute more than he must, or spend a penny more than he is obliged on other people ? " If you want good work done, you must be prepared to pay for it " ; and even in philanthropic and religious activities, where self-interest is supposed to have the minimum of influence, it is tacitly assumed or expected that important or additional service will command an extra reward. On the other hand, those who by their own earlier exertions or the industry of others know that a competency is assured without further toil, join the " leisured classes," and society feels that it is quite natural and innocent for them to relinquish any engagements with which formerly their days may have been filled. In fact, we could hardly conceive a world which was not bound together by the " cash nexus," and driven on by the spur of self-interest. For such a world as this, is not competition, as the economists

say, the only possible system? Is not human society fundamentally competitive and self-regarding—the very antithesis of what we have found in the family?

The discussion of the subject must not be allowed to pass over into the unreal. No one seriously proposes that in any future condition of society able-bodied men shall be supported whether they labour or not. "If any will not work, neither let him eat." It is our present system which forces State philanthropy to disobey the wise precept of St Paul. To make sustenance a right, irrespective of any corresponding duty, would be to provide a temptation which might be fatal to the energy of many respectable persons. It is one thing to refuse to absolute idleness the necessities of life. It is another thing to give as little as possible lest idleness should result.

On the other hand, a man who agrees to give a fair day's work for a fair wage, and breaks his agreement, cannot expect to continue in employment, whether his employer is the State or an individual or a company. Even if he works where the eye of the foreman cannot always be on him, some means can still be devised for the discovery of a shirker. Those who know anything of the ingenuity of modern industrial methods and devices will not despair of this; and far too many men are paid fixed wages, both in high and low ranks of labour, to allow us to suppose that assurance of a competence, so long as the work is done somehow or other, means certainty of idling.

The statement of Galton,[1] that "we are goaded into activity by the activities and struggles of life,"

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 18.

is only partially true. Some boys will work twice as hard as before for a prize. Some boys will work no harder for ten prizes. Very few refuse to work at all save under the dread of the birch. A school in which this was true would be felt to cast reflections on the master. It is not to be wondered at if the master differs from the boy as to the amount of work to be done. But it has yet to be proved that the members of any class, if they feel that they are treated fairly, and know (as all should know) that for persistent idleness they will be made to suffer, acknowledge no spur but compulsion and fear.[1]

If the workman suspects that his master gives as little as possible, he will do the same. But a sense of fairness is neither to be found, nor missed, in any one class of society; and it is far more natural, when conditions are as they should be, for a man to take an honest pride in being a good workman than to take a mean delight in being a bad one. In any case, the question, rightly understood, is one of character and morality rather than of economics. If a man will not work, you do not conquer him even by starving him. The only conquest worth gaining is to make him ready and willing to work.

No one can doubt the existence of selfishness in the heart of man. But the real explanation of its action in industry, and its apparent call for the drastic remedies of competition, alike among capitalists and labourers, may have a very different explanation. It is very difficult to generalise about human nature. We have few means for deciding what are its fundamental characteristics. Philo-

[1] Whatever may be said about the schoolmaster, it does not follow that the employer is always the best judge of a reasonable output of labour.

sophers and theologians, old and new, have been hopelessly at variance on the subject. We only know that human nature is plastic, and that what we observe in human nature from time to time is the result of whatever may be fundamental therein as acted upon by human society. "Der Mensch ist was er isst," said the courageous Feuerbach. "A man is what he eats." But this is to forget that before he eats there must be something to eat as well as to be eaten. A sounder though more cumbrous equation would be, "a man is what he brings with him into the world *plus* the training and treatment he receives while there." Now while we can tell nothing, *a priori*, about the first element on the right-hand side of the equation, we can know a good deal about the second. And when we are told that man is naturally self-seeking, we must inquire what has been the training of the man on whose actions the statement is based.

The answer is instructive. The whole of the social and commercial training administered in our society is directed to inculcating self-centredness. The child does not possess it; the school-boy generally scorns it. Each is apt to be decidedly selfish; that is, he likes his own way whenever he happens to be thinking about it. But very often he is not thinking about it at all. There are large contented spaces of life for each of them, when the performance of customary actions, unconscious guidance by customary standards, and the calm enjoyment of what is given them, fill up the measure of their thought and activity. Sudden desires and sudden griefs are common enough in any healthy child. Yet how quickly both may be checked; and how quickly the sense of rest in familiar things takes their place.

And only the abnormal school-boy fails to respond to calls of school-boy honour, or of his cherished loyalty to his idea of manliness or good form, to his "house," his family, his country, or his chosen hero. His individual desires have a territory of their own; but it is very strictly delimited by the great powers surrounding it—powers which, if all goes well, will in time show themselves as the guardians of conscience and morality. His very independence is nourished by the common standard to which he necessarily yet voluntarily conforms. He learns to think and choose for himself because he can only think and choose in terms of the larger life within which he lives.

But when he grows up, there is a change. He finds a standard of life around him other than that to which home and school have made him accustomed. "Each one for himself" means no longer, "each one to do the best he can in harmony with the common ideals." There is no more "playing the game." You must now "get on" or drop off. People may envy you; they will not pity. He learns that up to a certain point Malthus was right. There are never enough places, or "jobs," to go round. There is no "house" or family to be fond of. Genuine conscious selfishness appears for the first time. But the youth's selfishness, like his self-forgetfulness, is learnt from society. It is the creed and the practice of his new companions. Society gave him his old principles; society now bids him forget these, and take over a new set. Not that he entirely breaks with the old. No one ever does. There are certain restraints in every society; "things which nobody does." A cowboy may do almost anything he likes, but he must not steal a horse. Neither a book-

maker nor a doctor can claim the payment of a debt at law, but in certain circles the first will be paid long before the second. The gambler recognises the power of unwritten laws as reverently as the prophet. And in many families and business firms there are honourable traditions of kindliness and courtesy between masters and servants which we are apt to call, rather pathetically, "old-fashioned." But, in every case, it is only the few who succeed in being original and independent, either in their good deeds or their bad.

It thus appears that what we call the natural selfishness of the economic man, as we can observe him at present, is, to a very appreciable extent, the result of education. *Abeunt studia in mores.* A different training might give, as it has given, different results. Indeed, to talk about natural selfishness is to misunderstand the first teachings of psychology. The ruler of a man's actions is not selfishness; to assert that is either the rashest of generalisations or the most hopeless of pessimisms; it is his interest. "The same thing," rejoins the orthodox economist; "have I not been asserting the whole time that a man does what it is his interest to do?" But we must be cautious in using the word "interest." The economist uses it for what will pay a man, or for what he expects will pay him. But the latter is often something very different from the former; and many men are painfully uncertain as to whether a thing is going to pay or not; while many others will at certain times despise the question altogether.[1]

When, however, the psychologist talks of "interest," he means (if we may quote Professor James) that "we notice only those sensations which

[1] See page 164.

are signs to us of things which happen practically or æsthetically to interest us," [1] or, further, in the words of a more recent work, " the term is used also to denote a comparatively stable condition or bias of the mind. We are said to possess interests. . . . These permanent interests in adult life practically make up ourselves. If they were swept away we should be to all intents and purposes dead. . . . Even our bodies would soon perish." [2] A man's interests are the things which he habitually notices, desires, fears. Some of these are fixed for him by the fact that he has a body. Some, by the fact that he grows up and lives with other people, who never will nor can let him alone ; he would be miserable if they did. Others, by the fact that he has an individual mind and soul. But even these last, for the majority of people, are moulded and suggested by society. Why is it that every one went at one time to archery meetings and now goes to the golf links ? Why did all the theologians of the Greek Church busy themselves with the problem of the nature of the Logos, and, in the Latin Church, with sin and redemption ?

Now, a man's prevailing interest may be money-making and " getting on," or it may be sport or travel or philanthropy or even loyalty to a losing cause. Two points, then, emerge clearly from this discussion ; first, that a man is not necessarily self-centred ; and this conclusion destroys the foundation of the economic doctrine of the necessity of a competitive organisation of industry. Secondly, that while a man's interests are not fixed for him by nature, they are moulded by society. This assertion lays the basis for the hope of economic progress.

[1] James, " Text Book of Psychology," p. 171.
[2] Mellone and Drummond, " Elements of Psychology," p. 128.

For if society will once more surround her members with the thought of something besides individual monetary advancement, they will certainly respond.

VI. " Once more." To some this expression will need justification. Has society done so in the past ? It has ; and when we consider this point, we are prepared to listen to the real witness of economics. In the first place, how did economic society actually come into being ? No shrewder account has ever been given than that of Plato in the famous passage in the second book of the " Republic." It arose from the necessity of specialisation that was felt whenever a number of alert men lived together. *Non omnia possumus omnes.* A state of existence in which every man is his own food-producer, tool-maker, clothier, armourer, wizard and priest, is not to be called life ; it is hardly to be found among the lowest savages observable to-day. Either ability or custom quickly sets one man to this task, another to that.

Specialisation means co-operation and exchange. It does not necessarily mean competition at all. Over the greater part of the earth's surface, and throughout the greater part of man's history, competition has played no part worth speaking of in industry. It has been almost as unknown in mediæval English manors and in many modern English villages as in the countless village communities of India and China. Nor has the law of brute force, the rule of the stronger, been anything but an exception, though a highly important one. " Robber barons " have always existed to levy toll on industry ; they exist to-day in the most civilised communities ; perhaps they flourish best there ; but they have never influenced the spirit of industry ; and all industrial progress has meant quietly but steadily pushing them

on one side. The bandits of the castles which frowned over the Rhine have long since disappeared. The Florentine nobles were glad to be enrolled in the city gilds. It may be that the great landlords of our time, some of whose title-deeds are not morally able to bear much more inspection, will find that their power to take toll of all the industry on their estates will some day become as extinct.

But secondly, what has been the prevailing feature of economic history? The answer is the same. Not competition, but co-operation. Economic history, unlike economic theory, leads us back to the family. Professor Ashley has pointed out "four stages in the development of industry . . . the family system, the gild system, the domestic system, the factory system."[1] We have already seen what an important part has been played in all early economics by the family, large or small. Here, naturally, there is no thought of competition. The family, from an economic point of view, is simply a small but often highly organised society in which each member is expected to contribute to the common stock according to his ability, and receives therefrom according to his needs; and the wide prevalence of the large family system shows how fully such a society corresponds to the needs and instincts of human nature. Some will doubtless urge that real economic life only begins when we cross beyond the borders of family life, and that with this step we enter the area of competition. The surprising thing is that this assertion is not borne out by the facts. In the first place, the border-line is extremely hard to draw; the organisation of a large family pervades the whole of a primitive society. If members thereof are not actually akin, they have

[1] "Economic History and Theory," Pt. II., p. 219.

to be regarded as such, and initiated into the common worship and customs. In the second place, where we can draw the line, the community is simply a bundle of families, and the different families, and their working members, are related to one another much as the members of a single family among themselves.

Turn to the oldest of the larger industries, agriculture. It is quite doubtful when agricultural land in Europe ceased to be the property of the community as a whole, or whether it was so held originally.[1] The instinct of property is the manifestation of one of the most primordial of human needs. Tools and weapons are certainly regarded as belonging to individuals sooner than portions of the earth's surface ; probably there never was a time when plots of land have not been jealously guarded by some individuals or groups against others, and the extent, both of such groups and of their claims, must have varied to an infinite degree. But one thing is certain, that when we examine any form of the manor or mark—the early Teutonic agricultural unit —it is a community in the proper sense of the word ; it tills the land for its own purposes ; and though one of its members may be a lord and others freemen and others slaves, each has his appointed part to fill in the common life.

This co-operation might be very rough and wasteful, and, to individuals, irksome and oppressive ; certain people, again, might have small patches or plots of their own, or there might be no proper co-operation at all ; each man might till his own allotted

[1] See De Laveleye, " Primitive Property " (1878), Fustel de Coulanges, " Origin of Property in Land " (1891), Letourneau, " Property, its Origin and Development " (1892), Vinogradoff, " English Society in the Eleventh Century " ; also Hammond, J. L. and B., " The Village Labourer."

portion, giving so much time each year to working on the domain of the lord of the manor ; the important thing is that he did not live or work to himself. His tenure depended on his membership in the community as a whole, and by its rules and usages he was bound to abide. So long as he did that, and the manor continued to exist, his maintenance was sure ; but he could count on nothing else. And what is true of the Teutonic mark is found in all parts of the world. A man may lay claim to any land he has cleared, and can hold ; but in general the community acquires or owns the land and sets its members to work side by side upon it. There may be independence ; there is no competition. The system is co-operation and nothing else.[1]

VII. " But has not agriculture a special character ? Other industries do not offer a natural field for co-operation." On the contrary, the early history of other industries shows that the absence of competition was either taken for granted or explicitly aimed at. Naturally, we have scantier evidence here than in agriculture and land tenure ; but we do know that a great number of trade societies or *collegia* existed in the Roman empire and earlier, both in and out of Italy, though little is known of their powers and laws. But in one respect they were like the craft gilds of mediæval Europe ; they implied the combination of common trade interests and regulations with a common religious and social life. The craft gilds, which began to come into prominence in the thirteenth century, were self-governing bodies of craftsmen, authorised and regulated by the towns in which they were formed.

[1] If communal ownership was not original, the transition to such ownership is the more remarkable.

It is often difficult to say where regulation by the municipality ended and the independent government of the craft itself began. The crafts certainly arranged their own religious observances, craft banquets, benefits, charities, burial services, and the like; but they were also bound to obey the rules as to the nature and method of their work, the individuals admitted into the craft, and the kind of tools to be used and the quality of the raw materials; selling below a certain price or mixing different qualities of articles or work, and the carrying on of the industry by anyone outside the craft and therefore not amenable to the rules, were strictly prohibited. That is to say, the industry was looked on as a service to society as a whole, and those who were engaged in it were bound, and bound themselves, to abstain from the very practices which competition enforces upon industry to-day. True, it was also at times distinctly unprogressive; but some progress —in matters of art, extraordinary progress—was possible; and if society considered that the questionable results of unregulated competition were a heavy price to pay for the chance of progress in other directions, was it altogether foolish?

Previous to the appearance, with developing industry, of the craft gilds was the ascendancy of the merchant gilds. These originated in the desire for mutual protection and help. When piracy on the high seas carried on its trade as unblushingly as in the days of Homer, and when bandits of all ranks lay in wait for travellers on every high road, and even townsmen were apt to regard strangers as people outside the pale of morals, combination was essential to the adventurous merchant's existence. Combination meant influence, and in time the merchant gilds

became supreme in many towns and monopolised their whole industry, both in manufacture and sale; the Hanseatic league of merchants, with centres all over Northern Europe, became one of the greatest political powers of the fourteenth century. Like the later craft gilds, they found their organisation very useful for social and religious purposes as well as for commerce. Great care was taken to see that the same burdens and privileges were secured for each member. It is true that there is little to suggest the curbing of competition in their rules, but the reason for this was not that a free rein was allowed to competition, but that in those simple days, when to send out an "argosy" was still a "venture," the possibility of competition hardly existed. The difficulty was to reach the market, rather than to find a purchaser when you had arrived. The merchants were at first too much occupied in helping one another against external foes, to think of expelling one another from the beaten ways of trade. Later on, their principle became not so much competition as demarcation—the same instinct which was at the bottom of the working of the manor.

"But all this," it may be argued, "is nothing to the point. We cannot go back to the Middle Ages now. The gilds have changed to the domestic system of industry, and the domestic to the factory system. Modern progress has left the gilds as useless as so many King Harries or Spanish galleons." It is very much to the point, however, as regards the argument that competition is inseparable from commerce, and that it is the nature of man to grasp all he can from everyone he sees. The history of industry is as emphatic in denying this as is psychology. If, on the other hand, the force of this

denial is questioned, the upholder of the present system must remember three things. First, a state of affairs which has been unknown in the world till recent times must be owing to certain causes, and these causes may cease to operate. How do we know that the surroundings of to-day's march will last till the end of the journey or even till to-morrow? Second, the instinct for combination and federation is exerting itself with increasing authority in all departments of industry to-day; this change, it is true, appears in many cases to be merely substituting battles between organised armies for an indiscriminate mêlée, but it shows that the individual is able to sink his interest, even now, in that of the larger body to which he belongs. Third, that old proverbs about honesty being the best policy and a good name being rather to be chosen than great riches (as we might say, than a large capital), still receive abundant exemplification. Men who make large and speedy profits by whatever methods are open to them still find that riches take to themselves wings, and the man who does not put the making of money first often gets the most out of life—even out of commercial life.

But beside all this, the area and the weapons of competition are constantly being limited by legislation, because legislation reckons that there is something more important than the securing of profits, and that obedience to the economist's generalisations about human nature comes second to the prevention of disease and the preservation of a healthy and efficient life. However it may learn the lesson, from a rising tide of pauperism and lunacy, or from reports of Royal Commissions on Physical Degeneration and the like, a State is bound to discover

sooner or later that the true wealth of a nation consists in healthy men and women, able and willing, as Swift once said, to make two blades of grass grow where one grew before.

VIII. In other words, the centre of gravity of theoretical economics is not to be regarded as fixed. We are at the threshold of the transformation of competition by co-operation. Competition isolates the individual, and the isolation of the individual is his destruction. Only as allied, bound up with others, can the individual be himself. The modern insistence on race makes this perfectly clear. A recent writer[1] has compared the power of race to the so-called range of power in a magnet. If a magnet is brought near to a heap of iron filings, the pieces all take up a mathematical figure in relation to each other. "In the same way a human race, a genuine nation, is distinguished from a mere congeries of men. The character of the race becoming more and more pronounced by pure breeding is like the approach of a magnet. . . . The power, or let us say rather the importance, of every individual is multiplied a thousandfold by his organic connection with countless others. . . . Man cannot fulfil his highest destiny as an isolated individual, as a mere exchangeable pawn, but only as a portion of an organic whole, as a member of a specific race."

This emphasis on race may be exaggerated. And competition and struggle will not be abolished in the transformations of society which are on the way. But their function in the great process of evolution has been for the most part misunderstood. Competition makes for progress, but only when it is competition with nature and with ignorance. In this

[1] Chamberlain, H. S., "Foundations of the Nineteenth Century."

struggle men are not the competitors and foes of one another, but the indispensable allies. Set beside the history of such an alliance, industrial competition is a thing of yesterday. Every age bears its witness to this truth. The members of the savage pack combined, however loosely, to defend themselves against wild beasts, to hunt their prey, and to subdue the jungle and the desert; the nomad shepherds valued and avenged each man's life simply because it was part of the life of a tribe; the village community patiently tilled its common fields season after season, and gradually subdued the neighbouring waste; the freebooters of Greece and Italy built cities which were destined to lay an unreserved claim on the services of every man who held the prize of citizenship therein, and to win leisure for cultivating the arts and comforts of life; the "pax Romana" brought whole peoples into commercial relations with each other and made possible a supply of demands hardly so much as felt before; modern society, with its increasing inter-dependence, has ensured the king's peace on the king's highways, and changed the petty local fairs of incipient commerce to the great distributing centres and agencies of to-day. These, and not the familiar and increasing struggle between men and trades and interests, are the real agents of advance.

Peace has never meant sloth. There is at once too much energy in man, and too strong a desire for possession and for comfort. Man is at once too bad and too good to turn the Gospel ideal into folly in this manner. It is just in so far as the area of struggle with other human beings has been lessened and its intensity curbed, that the race has grown taller, stronger, wiser, more able to resist disease,

and more skilled to yoke the once hostile forces of nature to its purposes. And though we may smile at the naïve restrictions of the ancient gilds, it was when the gilds were strongest that the mercantile cities of Northern Italy gave us the inimitable treasures of mediæval art, and the mercantile cities of England and France gave us the unapproachable glories of the Gothic cathedrals. The competition that walks with progress and achievement is not competition with men for things; it is competition with things for "the mighty hopes that make us men."

What form this new competition will take in the future it is idle to consider. Equally idle is it to blame those who urge its necessity for not describing its details. In matters of social and secular advance it is given to no one to prophesy the actual steps by which change will be accomplished. Could Luther, before the Diet of Worms, have described the Reformation Settlement in England, or Earl Grey, while passing the first Reform Bill, have outlined the mechanism of Parish Councils? We do not think the less of the intuition of Columbus because the land he found on the other side of the Atlantic was not the land he expected. It may be that we shall begin by establishing a national minimum of wages, food, housing, or health; or that the limitations of individual action in industry and commerce will be still further increased by law; or that private businesses will grow fewer and larger until private competition over-reaches itself and is practically eliminated, so that to introduce State control becomes a matter of ease; or all these processes may continue to act simultaneously.

In any case, all true advance must lie along the

line of insistence on duties and responsibilities rather than on rights; and such responsibilities will never be adequately discharged, either between masters and workmen, sellers and customers, until they are reinforced by co-operation and mutual help. There is hardly a duty which a man can hope to perform properly alone. There is hardly a man who cannot make the performance of duties easier for everyone around him. Enough that both faith in human nature and knowledge of human history point to a new order in which a mistaken training does not turn a man's eyes with suspicion and fear against his neighbour, and a misconstructed society no longer promises safety to the strong at the price of the ruin of the weak and unfortunate, and the neglect of the rules alike of morals and of religion.

We are thus brought back once more to the family. The ceaseless struggle to which the older economics and biology looked for all progress is the very antithesis of the family. If allowed full scope, it would certainly have proved the ruin of family life in our society. It now turns out to be the antithesis of all progress. It has been steadily restricted by the course of British legislation. It has proved to be false alike to psychology and to history, and to be founded on a complete misunderstanding of both. Its apparent strength and influence are entirely explicable by the eagerness with which its doctrines have been instilled into one generation after another in our commercial life. It has been wholly subordinate throughout a very large part of the economic history of the race, and its power has varied inversely with whatever progress the race has achieved.

IX. On the other hand, the closer study of economic facts, outlined in the preceding pages, shows that the true spirit of any valuable economic life is the spirit of the family. In a community which is really prosperous, all will bear each other's burdens. This mutual bearing of burdens has been dimly foreshadowed in the life of the early tribe or clan. It is clearly seen in the conduct of every well-regulated family. There, the weak are not driven to the wall or left to starve; they are protected and find tasks allotted to them proportionate to their ability. The ignorant are not bullied or cynically pushed aside by the wise or cunning, but taught and trained until the wise themselves are glad of their docile help. The diseased are not condemned to the poorest fare and a reluctant and niggardly attention which hastens their undeserved end; they are carefully led back into health or tended with an unselfishness which at once becomes in itself a valuable asset to the community. The young are not hurried into any immature form of wage-earning which may offer its dangerous and short-lived advantages; they are treated with a wisdom which recognises in the failure of any one of them to reach full-grown strength a distinct and irreparable loss to the society. The strong understand that every right implies a corresponding duty, and that whatever they can do to enable others to share their advantages makes their own lives happier and worthier. The aged are treated with the loving respect that delights to remember past services, and sees, in the generous support of old age, one of the most beautiful of nature's instincts and one of the best guarantees for the industry and self-sacrifice of the young.

It has often been urged that to carry out such a principle will be to revert to the "unprogressive Socialism" of savage tribal societies, where any attempt made by an individual to better himself or rise above his fellows is at once penalised as a violation of the "family" spirit of the tribe. All must share alike; no one must be conspicuous. Such a rule, of course, means stagnation. And this stagnation is what is actually observed in the majority of primitive societies.[1] But there is a world of difference between this and the establishment of a universal maximum or a universal minimum, saying "this is the utmost a man may do," or "this is the least a man shall have." The simple conditions of savage life have often allowed for the establishment of both. The semi-military conditions under which trade unions have often worked have driven them, in many cases, to enforce a maximum, as regards work and wage-earning, upon their members. For society as a whole, the rise of our modern industrial system has made both the maximum and the minimum impossible. We are now beginning to feel our way back towards the establishment of the latter. A prudent State will take care that every inducement is offered to each of its citizens to work and think and improve himself to his utmost capacity. It cannot be said that any State has reached this ideal at present, though its operation may be seen in many well-organised and united families. The diversity of gifts observable in every society means a certain amount of inequality of possessions. What a State must prevent is the accumulation of wealth which confers no benefit on society, and the conditions that drive a man to work

[1] See p. 191.

beyond his powers. One thing must be secured at all costs, namely, hope. The great fault of our present industrial system is that for hope it has substituted fear. To work for fear that we shall suffer if we do not, is slavery. To work in the hope that, if we work, we shall gain an adequate reward, is freedom. The case has been well put by a strong opponent of everything that could be called Socialism: "If a man has hope, he has the best thing there is in the world; and, as far as Government intervenes in private affairs, it should strive to make it possible for every man to improve his position. . . . If the wealthy were less ready to scatter their money, and more ready to devote time, thought, and work to the lifting of the degraded out of the mire, our social diseases would be of a milder type." [1]

To emphasise the alliance between economics and the family will remove a very persistent misconception. We are not replacing the imaginary "economic man" by an equally imaginary "socialistic man." We disbelieve in a view of human nature which makes it capable of nothing but exertion for its own narrow commercial interest. That is an ultra-Calvinistic interpretation of the doctrine of Original Sin. We disbelieve equally in any suggestion that every normal human being, if left to himself, will labour disinterestedly for the good of the community. Every person needs inducements to work. He even needs inducements to save, although, as Adam Smith taught, the desire to save is based on the desire to better our condition, a desire which "comes with us from the womb and never leaves us till we go into the grave."

[1] Headley, F. W., "Darwinism and Socialism," p. 332.

But if these inducements are applied with wisdom, the normal human being will respond. And among the strongest of these inducements must be reckoned affection for the members of a man's family, and desire to stand well with his associates, to render them assistance, and to join them in common action. To these we must add interest in any form of activity which provides pleasure, promises success, or satisfies the needs of a man himself or his friends.

The fault of the present competitive system is that it neglects every one of these inducements. It treats a man as an individual, or as a machine. The only inducement it understands and applies is the fear of being thrown upon the scrap-heap. However deeply those who are involved in the system dislike its working, they cannot help carrying it on. The society of the future is not likely to be so foolish as to wish to secure for every one of its members indiscriminately, whether they work or not, all that may be included in a generous minimum of food, shelter, and the like. The shiftless and the lazy will be treated more severely than at present. Instead of being simply supported, they will be forced to activities whereby at length they will support themselves. Such a severity is after all the truest kindness.

On the other hand, everyone will know that anxiety to find and do work will never be rewarded by disappointment, enforced idleness, and starvation; that genuine industry, whether in skilled or unskilled labour, will do more than procure a bare living wage followed by the workhouse as years advance; that the undertaking of family responsibilities will be seconded rather than penalised by society; and that idleness and waste-

fulness, among the rich as among the poor, will bring straitened circumstances and narrowed satisfactions. Such an ideal is as far as possible removed from the support of the idle by the industrious which, as some imagine, will result from any change in the system under which we labour at present. By its laws alone, the laws of co-operation, hope, and sympathy, can human nature find its fulfilment in the sphere of industry and commerce.[1]

Only within the circle of the family could such laws have been learnt. The New Testament, which has expressed them more explicitly than they have been expressed before or since, has gathered up all that human progress had hitherto revealed, and has made it the basis of a fresh revelation of true human well-being. There are thousands of families at the present moment in which these laws are cheerfully and eagerly obeyed. Many tendencies in our midst, of thought, administration, and legislation, are moving towards their fulfilment in society. Can there be a doubt that the society which would be naturally described in these terms would provide for all its members a life worth living, and this to a degree impossible for our present society, and even for the most fortunate and the wealthiest? How far removed are such conceptions of social advance

[1] As Mrs Bosanquet says ("The Strength of the People," p. 209): "There are immense reserves of indolence in all of us"; but we are not therefore, all of us, immensely indolent. "Before the overcrowding which makes it desirable to break up a family can occur, the heart of the family must have already been eaten out of it by selfishness and mutual indifference. The remedy is a purely moral one." This does not follow. The selfishness and mutual indifference may have been aided and made operative by economic helplessness and inefficiency, leading to the discovery that the members of the family have little or nothing to expect from each other. In that case (which is by no means infrequent) the remedy must be in part at least economic, and the ecomonic obstacles to the true play of family confidence and sympathy must be removed.

from " the predatory Socialism " over which so many ignorant and short-sighted people delight to shudder. " Predatory Socialists " perhaps exist ; predatory landlords and employers have certainly existed. But the predatory and competitive instincts (they cannot be separated) of which the orthodox economists constituted themselves the high-priests must in the end, like another Philistine Dagon, bow before a holier and more fundamental power. It is the glory of that power to bind together human beings of both sexes, of varying capacities, and of all ages, in a society which apportions to each according to his need, and expects, and obtains, from each according to his skill and strength. The possibility of the existence of such a society is the true presupposition of economics ; to produce it out of the confused tangle of present-day industry must be the desire of all who look to economics for any guidance in the service of their fellow-men ; and, if any abiding lesson is to be learnt from the past, its maintenance and development must be the object at which all useful economic investigation must aim.

CHAPTER IX

THE EVIDENCE OF THE SOCIAL PROBLEM

I. In the previous chapter we examined the science of Political Economy, and there, where we looked to find our ethical principles of comradeship and co-operation banned, and society set in firm opposition to all for which the family stands, we found unexpected words of blessing. There would have been no necessity to expect so little of economics, if economics had been more in the habit of taking account of society and the social problem. The earlier economists wrote as if no social problem existed, though it was facing them in perplexing confusion from the first moment they began to write. Now, however, it is not so easily neglected ; and for an increasing number of people to-day the only reason for studying economics is the light which that study may shed on the concrete and pressing questions of wages, housing, land, children, and employment.

In passing to these and allied considerations we need not prepare ourselves for the determined hostility which seemed to threaten us at the beginning of the last chapter. But we shall be standing on hotly debated territory. There are those who strongly protest against the interference of benevolent outsiders in all matters of supply and demand, whether of houses, of drink, or of labour. There are those, again, who deprecate the attention paid by many Christian people to social conditions and

problems. The Christian, they say, peremptorily but vaguely, had far better devote to the salvation of individuals all the time he can, and then leave them to alter their conditions themselves. Others have wondered whether the saving of individuals is altogether such a simple matter ; they note that individuals, when they are " saved," are more apt to leave their " conditions " than to attempt to alter them. Such observers are accordingly inclined to look for the promise of the future in better houses, higher wages, and shorter hours of labour, with larger provision of parks, recreation-grounds, pensions, and insurance. By another class of advisers we are reminded that nothing can make up for the absence of independence ; and since external help must inevitably weaken this, and at the same time prove itself desperately liable to deception and error, the sooner such help ceases, the better.

Some, aghast at the apparent want of heart in this recommendation, and also wearily conscious that it squares neither with the New Testament nor with the practice of the greatest philanthropists, would give freely, but only " to the deserving." Others, contemplating the consequent horrors of the neglected residuum, would have us pay more attention to the undeserving, in spite of the danger of diminishing thereby the strength of various " deterrents." Some cry out that all measures hitherto taken are merely palliatives, prolonging the misery instead of ending it, and bid us wait for some huge Armageddon in the future, out of the cleansing fires of whose artillery shall emerge, new-formed, a world where decent and joyous life is possible for all. Others find difficulty in drawing the line between palliative and remedy, holding that

it is the duty of private experiment to lead the way, on a small scale, and of the State to follow on a large one. All the time the State is constantly at work, well-meaning though often puzzled and bewildered, checking vagrancy, relieving pauperism, humanizing industry, interfering with commerce, and even in certain trades deciding upon hours of labour and minimum rates of wages. On the other hand, private persons, in spite of all their theories, have felt the call of insistent need and helplessness, and have refused to be debarred from meeting it, however ineffectively, out of their own resources.

We are far from suggesting that there is any great disadvantage in this conflict of opinions. Indeed, the complete triumph of any one of them over the rest would be disastrous. But it is not easy to discover what is the bearing of such complicated considerations as these on the relation of the family to social life and needs in general. On the other hand, in one respect these conflicting theories are alike; they all forget to ask with any seriousness what bearing their problems have upon family life, and what light could be shed upon them by that institution which, through all its varied history, has needed neither committee of management nor subscription list.[1] It may be that to attempt to remedy this strange neglect will also be to settle some disputes of long standing and increasing urgency.

II. The first problem to be considered is naturally that of the children. As a wise observer of modern methods has remarked, it is cheaper to spend pence over children than pounds over paupers. Yet how many pence the little ones require from the large purse of the State! Fifty years ago it was enough

[1] Mrs Bosanquet, "The Family," page vi.

if we could protect them from the worst cases of carelessness in parents and of brutality in employers ; now we have learnt the necessity of taking into account all the circumstances affecting their health, growth, and education, from before birth to the year when they leave school as recruits for the great army of workers. The first fact which stares us in the face when we consider the nation's children is the sheer wastage of child life. In England, out of every 1000 children born, some 110 die before they reach the age of twelve months. This, we may be thankful, compares favourably with other European countries ; in Germany, the rate is 200 per thousand. But it is nearly twice as high as the normal death-rate—the annual number of deaths per thousand of persons of all ages ; and when fortified by the parents' ignorance and poverty, the death-rate of infants shows no tendency to diminish. Of those who so die a third of the whole number die in the first three months of their little lives, and in the poorer parts of our large towns the rate rises as high as 300 per thousand and over.

And what of those who survive these dangerous months ? It has been found that the height and weight of the children in our elementary schools vary directly with the amount of house-room enjoyed by the family. In New York it has been estimated that in a school population of 650,000, 195,000 children lose one year out of six through ill-health. Feeble bodies, dirty clothes, sore eyes, filthy heads, swollen glands, decaying teeth, diseased lungs or hearts—one or more of these ills accompany the progress of half the children of our mean streets. The chief sufferers from drink and sexual vice are the innocent children, in whom the cravings and

excesses of their parents assume new and subtle forms of disease.[1] But even where these causes of undeserved misery are absent, the very conditions of city life rob the child of all that it most needs, fresh air, green playing-fields and quiet rest; and poverty drives crowds of little ones to work almost before they have learnt to play. A still more serious fact is that of the 6,000,000 children attending elementary schools in England and Wales, it is estimated that there are 48,000 mentally deficient; of these 3 out of every 4 need constant oversight.

On the other hand, it is practically agreed that, except in the case of drunken or syphilitic or mentally deranged parents—sombre association!—nature supplies us with good material, even in the most sordid homes, if we can but use it. Here is the real tragedy of child life. Every generation offers us the hope of strong and pure men and women for the future; and then, under the blight of parental neglect or ignorance or destitution, or even indulgence, the early hope withers and disappears. By the time that the child has left school and enters some blind-alley employment for which his parents and he are equally eager, the last trailing cloud of glory is melting away; and another unemployable or hooligan or mentally defective may soon be on our hands. Whatever happens, the children must be fed, or they cannot be taught. No one now will dare to deny this. The State cannot afford to lose the raw material of its citizens.

As a result, the State is becoming more and more the nurse of its children. The recent Children Act, which should do much for its helpless protégés,

[1] *Cf.* p. 204. The statement in the text cannot be doubted, whatever view be taken of the precise influence of heredity.

would have been laughed out of Westminster two generations ago, as an impossible piece of grandmotherly legislation. The nation's schools are slowly but surely coming to pay as much attention to the physical as to the mental equipment of their scholars. Where will it all end? Already the growing demands of doctors and educationalists are being answered by a cry from the overburdened ratepayer, who can scarcely keep his own children in health, much less maintain those of his careless neighbours.

III. The question of wages suggests some less gloomy reflections. Undoubtedly, in the last sixty years, the rate of wages has gone up and the general level of prices for the most part has fallen. A penny has, generally, bought more than it did, and the workman has more pence in his pocket. In the last fifteen years, however, there has been a backward tendency. Money wages have nearly doubled themselves since 1850; but since 1896 there has been a more or less steady, though not nearly corresponding, rise in prices.[1]

Further, however, every year sees an improvement in the width of our streets and the number of our parks and the efficiency of our municipal services; while Trade Unions, at any rate until

[1] The figures, as given in the Memoranda on Health and Social Conditions published by the Local Government Board in 1909, are—Wages, 1850, 100 (index number); 1907, 181.7. Prices, 1850, 100; rising in the next five years to 131.2; then dropping till, in 1896, they are 79.2; then rising to 103.9 in 1907. The rise has been maintained since; so that, while money wages are still rising, real wages have been stationary, or actually falling, for the last fifteen years. Professor Bowley gives the figures thus: from 1880 to 1900 wages rose from 100 to 130: from 1900 to 1910 they fluctuated, reaching 128 finally. From 1880 to 1895 prices dropped from 125 to 91 and then rose steadily to 100 in 1910. See paper by B. S. Rowntree, "The Industrial Unrest," in the *Contemporary Review*, Oct. 1911.

quite recent times, have been steadily increasing and consolidating their strength.

But to what do all these improvements amount? When trade is steady and employment regular, the engine-fitter or compositor in London or Manchester with 39s. or 35s. a week, does not, perhaps, need to complain. But what of the agricultural labourer in the Midlands, with his 14s. 6d. a week, or in the S.W. counties, with 13s. or less? Neither low rents nor cheap garden produce can make such wages satisfactory. And what of the carter or dock labourer, whose wages (when his work is regular, which it rarely is) are 20s., and the rent for three rooms is 6s. or more? You cannot be economical, much less thrifty, when you are living from hand to mouth; and how much has to come out of that 20s. in addition to rent? At least a tenth of the population earn wages insufficient to allow them, even with the most careful management, to secure the barest necessaries of a healthy life. When we consider the sweated workers, who can, perhaps, with luck, secure 6s. or even 7s. after a week of eighty working hours, we wonder at the iron heroism and persistence of which flesh and blood is capable. No less impressive is the splendid resolution of the ill-fed, disappointed man who will start out, morning after morning, on the hopeless search for a job, and of the aged and more than half-starved widow in her garret bending all the livelong day and far into the night over her buttons or her card-board boxes. Both of them know that the prison and the workhouse are alike ready to take them in, and relieve them of all further anxiety.

What can be done? Can we secure a living wage for every man and woman engaged in industry?

How can the workman claim to be protected from the effects of bad trade, it is asked, when he hopes to gain from its recovery ? And how can an employer be expected to offer higher wages than the pittances which work-people, when driven by need and hunger, will accept from his rivals ? In certain trades the impossible has been performed. In many well-organised industries wages have been agreed upon, and are never likely to fall below subsistence level. The Trade Boards Act, carried specially in order to deal with sweated industries, has materially raised the scale of remuneration for chainmakers and lace-workers, and will similarly affect paper-box makers and tailors. The coal strike of March 1912 did not indeed persuade Parliament to place a minimum wage on the statute book, but it made provision in every district for the establishment of a minimum wage by a board which, in the event of disagreement between owners and men, will register the decisions of a neutral party.

Trade Unions, on the other hand, if they are to be a power, whether for good or evil, must exercise a stern discipline upon their members. But where the constant fear of unemployment goes hand in hand with the low standard of life begotten of uncertainty as to the future and of living at a " loose end," and when to these is added the selfish desire for instant and gross enjoyment, so natural when higher pleasures are removed far out of reach, the Union may display its advantages in vain. With no prospect of fairly regular work, or with unhealthy toil that must be driven through with a furious eagerness if the mere necessities of food and shelter are to be provided, there is an end to subordination and comradeship. What wonder if the preacher

of religion is baffled as often as the apostle of Trade Unionism, and comes to look for his converts anywhere else than from the mean tenements huddled around the dock gates ?

Thus, side by side with the problem of sweating appears that of unemployment. The moral difficulties are the same, whether it is a question of too much work, or too little. With the main features of this latter problem everyone has a melancholy familiarity. It is not that work is growing steadily less. Instead of that, there is a bewildering number of trades which have a slack time each year, and in which large numbers of men are regularly idle, however industrious or willing ; and in addition to these seasonal fluctuations there are the cyclical fluctuations, occurring, as it would seem, at intervals of six years or so, spreading through a whole country and even across the world, and involving every trade in their perplexity and stagnation. At such times a tenth of the skilled workers of the nation may be idle, while a quarter of the low-skilled and unorganised may be learning how to subsist on the earnings of wife or child, or how to pick up a precarious livelihood, in the streets or on the roads, often at odds with the law. No wonder that, when times improve, they are not eager for the employment which they now know how to dispense with. And what if there is no work for a man to do ? He still must eat. And as he eats the stinted bread of idleness, he will either come to be satisfied with it, as a " wont-work " or a " work-shy "—the terms are becoming quite technical—or else constant going short will leave him physically unable, when the work returns, to take advantage of it ; and what is put down as laziness may be in reality lack of stamina.

Unemployment, or, as it should often be called, under-employment, spells degeneration. It is an economic disease; it is a moral tragedy. And if it is serious and heart-breaking for one who loves the manhood and womanhood of England, what does it mean for the children? As long as there is food, it must go to keep up the strength of the man who has to tramp the streets all day searching for the work that is never found, even though the baby at the breast goes short. If the father's fitness and inclination for work decay simultaneously, the health and the morale of the children fade away side by side. Perhaps the father drifts away altogether, and supports the home no more; perhaps the mother goes out to work, or takes to drink; the long battle she has fought to keep the home clean, tidy and decent comes to a sudden and disastrous end, and the family is "broken up."

IV. Unemployment leads on at once to the thorny question of the relief of distress. Nothing seems so easy and so pleasant. Nothing is really so difficult and so disheartening. What could be more beautiful and more Christian than for me to supply the needs of the poor out of my own superfluity or sufficiency? Could there be either a better justification or a better use for my wealth? Has not private and spontaneous charity received the commendation of piety in all ages, and are not the calls for it, happily or unhappily, as numerous and urgent to-day as ever? They are; and therein lies the condemnation of our charity. Human nature is always prone to respond to the treatment it meets with. This plasticity, this readiness to respond to every influence in its surroundings, is often our greatest hope. But it is not seldom our despair. By some mysterious psychological law, I

cannot give without calling up in the recipient a fresh readiness to receive—often, a new unwillingness to do anything else. Strangely enough, my own gift may have a corresponding effect upon myself; the transference of the coin, the grocery ticket, or the hospital note acts like an opiate; it stifles any uncomfortable feeling as to the necessity of going further and seeing the case through, while it may positively please my sense of self-importance and goodness, and prompt to more acts of undiscriminating bounty. Such charity is often twice cursed; it curses him that gives, and him that takes.

Then must the only relief of distress be official and public? If so, our difficulties are very far from being at an end. On what principle shall the state supply the wants of its needy sons? A century ago, after the example set by the Speenhamland magistrates in 1795, on the principle of "to each according to his needs," wages were supplemented and relief was administered on a fixed and definite scale, in the hope that, in spite of the poverty of those hard times, not a pauper might be left in the country. Instead, pauperism grew by leaps and bounds; the poor-rate swelled until national bankruptcy was actually staring the country in the face. Then, with the Poor Law of 1834, came an entire change. As if to allow posterity the luxury of deciding between two opposing theories, the law settled that destitution alone should be relieved, and that relief should only be given under the strictest conditions of deterrence. The charity administered by the Guardians of the Poor was to be so harsh and meagre that no one who could possibly work for himself would dream of doing anything else.

" Treat the applicant like a criminal, and criminals will be the only persons to apply."

In theory this was excellent ; in practice, as every one knows, it began to break down at once. For, in the first place, the wrong persons were deterred. The new treatment proved too bad for the good ; but quite good enough for the bad. The industrious and self-respecting, when overtaken by sickness or misfortune, preferred to live, or die, in starvation and squalor, so long as they could preserve their freedom. The loafer and the wastrel found that idling was really as pleasant inside the " house," where there was no need to take thought for any morrow, as outside. The criminal and even the prostitute found that their best plan was to live by their wits outside as a general rule, but to take refuge in the house when a period of rest or recuperation was advisable. And in the second place, the relief of destitution turned out to be its endowment. The guardians were not allowed to attempt preventive measures, nor could they follow up any case which " took its discharge." Even the bottle of medicine given by the Poor Law doctor might be flung away or made worse than useless by neglect of every precaution which he might order. And when schools for the children and hospitals for the sick were built, the parents could take the children back again into the streets, to forget every lesson so painfully and expensively learnt, and patients could return, when cured, to their old unhealthy conditions and careless habits, till recurring disease drove them back to the guardians once more.

It is not surprising that the present Poor Law system has filled both observers and workers with dismay. The recent Royal Commission recom-

mended unanimously that the responsibilities of the Guardians should be handed over entirely to the County Councils, and that the old Unions should come to an end. Such a reform, however, could by itself do but little. Is more relief to be given, or less? If more, the danger of fresh pauperisation is ever lying in wait for us; if less, we may pride ourselves on the disappearance of destitution, but at the price of allowing sorrow and helplessness to drag on an existence miserable to themselves and dangerous to the community outside. What is obviously needed is some change in the manner and the spirit in which relief is given. This, too, has been recognised by all the Commissioners. The majority has recommended a much more careful co-ordination of public with voluntary assistance, believing that by skilled voluntary work the dangers of ignorant or careless distribution will be avoided. The minority has urged that the various classes of needy persons, children, the sick, the mentally defective,[1] and the unemployed should be taken out of the Poor Law altogether and handed over to existing public authorities, dealing with health and education and labour, or others to be created, whose duty it is to search out and prevent rather than to await and cure, even if cure should be possible. In other words, harshness and suspicion must somehow be replaced by the sympathy and trust and forethought which at their best can only be learnt in the family.

V. Before we leave this part of our discussion, we must notice two problems in which the moral side of the question is specially prominent—the problems of alcoholism and of what is generally termed social

[1] With regard to the mentally defective, all parties are agreed that the Poor Law must have nothing to do with them.

vice. The former, alcoholism, was the earliest of the social problems to be directly attacked by the churches. The first men to point out the evils of the abuse of alcohol confined themselves to urging complete abstinence upon individuals, and were mostly regarded, even by their fellow-religionists, as somewhat dangerous fanatics. As the movement spread, the social evils resulting from intemperance were more widely felt; and it became common to regard drink as the prime cause of squalor and unemployment, disease and destitution. This attitude gained the more favour, in certain circles, because it freed those who held it from the inconvenient necessity of inquiring whether there might not be other and less easily stigmatised causes for these evils.

Subsequently, however, alcohol was attacked by a new set of foes; the doctors, the magistrates, and the judges. By these, too, it was pointed out, in the grave tones of science and with all the weight of statistics, that all indulgence in alcohol was a prolific source both of debility and disease, of crime, of physical degeneration and of infantile mortality. But, on the other hand, it now became impossible to remain blind to the fact that drink was not only a cause but also an ally and an effect of every social evil; that bad conditions of housing or employment might drive a man to those very drinking habits which would force him to worse employment or to a less desirable tenement. As a Lancashire judge put it, "Drink is the shortest way out of Manchester." Drink thus becomes involved in a vicious circle; under-employment, inefficiency, drink, more inefficiency, less employment.

It is true that there has been a definite improve-

ment in this matter. The annual "drink bill" of the nation has been diminishing for some years. The abstainer himself is ceasing to be a laughing-stock, on the whole, even in the highest and the lowest levels of society. We are all anxious to lessen the facilities for drinking. We all talk gravely about chronic alcoholism. But the melancholy fact remains that where alcohol does the most harm, alike to body and mind, the temptations to its perilous joys are the strongest. It tends regularly to destroy the sense of moral responsibility and the spontaneous warmth of natural affection, to stimulate gusts of cruelty and sexual passion, and to produce children whose power of resistance to every evil influence around them is fatally weakened. To a nation of dwellers in large cities, such as we have become in the last two generations, there is no graver menace than alcohol.

The discussion of sexual self-indulgence is a matter of peculiar difficulty. Any appreciation of its extent must inevitably lie open to great uncertainty. Its results are equally difficult to discover. Guesses, more or less probable, at the amount of prostitution in modern cities have often been made. The more moderate estimates of the number of men who support this shameful trade would place it at something approaching a quarter of the adult male population. In this particular trade, the demand, in the present condition of our modern civilisation, would be strong enough to satisfy itself in spite of a scanty supply. But the supply is not scanty. It is plentiful enough to startle anyone who thinks seriously on the matter. "There will always be women to tempt," say some, "as long as there are men to be tempted." The reverse statement would

be nearer to the truth. Curiously enough, the most vigorous assailants of the system of prostitution in recent times have been writers who have classed themselves as socialists.[1] These men have realised that the woman is oftener the object of temptation, at least in the first instance, than the man.

Such temptation is as frequently economic as it is moral. Some authorities would say that economic pressure is far more potent than moral weakness. It is certain that if we could eliminate from the great host of the women of the streets all those who first joined the sorrowful profession through low wages and semi-starvation, to say nothing of the bad housing which so often accompanies these evil things, we should have comparatively little difficulty in dealing with the residuum, who have entered that way of life out of pure wantonness. When a girl who has not known for months what it is to have a full meal sees a half-sovereign thrown on the ground in front of her, it is something more than a " naturally corrupt heart " that drives her into evil,and allows her tempter to carry out his own sinful desire into act. What wonder that men who are convinced of the possibility of securing the necessities of decent life for every-one should denounce a trade which flourishes on the economic helplessness of women ? The wonder rather is that their opponents should pay so little heed to a system which they profess to regard with equal abhorrence.

Most authorities hold, first, that the evil is increasing ; and second, that State regulation can neither check the trade nor preserve from the horrible and insidious diseases which are its uniform accom-

[1] See, for example, Kelly, " Twentieth Century Socialism " ; Bebel, A., " Woman, in the Past, Present and Future," pp. 91 ff.

paniments for both sexes. What is certain is that overcrowding and the low wages which are in numbers of occupations paid to women are responsible, directly or indirectly, for driving into the trade a large proportion of the women working in it; that for those who are once entangled escape is a matter of enormous difficulty; and that the diseases which follow irregular self-indulgence can be propagated in no other way, but that they are as likely to scourge the innocent wife and the unborn child as the man who actually commits the sin. Further, it may be said that the vicious habit is in the most literal sense unnatural. Few indeed are the women who would choose the life apart from the compulsion of poverty, misfortune, or the social ostracism that follows on the false step. As for the man, let him have a healthy home, definite responsibilities, reasonable freedom from anxiety and opportunities for exercise and social life, and keep temptation from obtruding itself upon him, and he will be in comparatively little danger of an impure manner of life. But let him spend his days in unhealthy work or enforced idleness and loitering, and his nights in a crowded court with a public-house on one side of him and a brothel on the other, and it will be a matter neither of wonder nor of over-much blame if he falls. And in this case, as in every other, the sins of the fathers are visited on the children.[1]

VI. This brief summary of the chief aspects of the social problem has been necessary, in order to

[1] This form of stating the question is not intended to deny another very serious consideration, the demand exercised by the leisured and the well-to-do. In a very large part of this demand, the economic element is not indigence but affluence, and the habits of physical self-indulgence to which it constantly leads. A re-distribution of wealth which would make the idleness of affluence impossible would probably go far to drain both demand and supply.

emphasize the fact, often forgotten, that the worst result, in each case, is neither economic nor social. The very insistence with which the baffling problem, in these days, makes us attend to it turns our mind elsewhere. We have listened to appeals for our pity, our sympathy, our horror, till our ears are becoming somewhat dulled. These are now being replaced by fresh inducements. Every social evil, we are reminded, is a social burden. Consider the case of sweated industries. The employer is often a very hard-pressed man, who does not know which to fear most, competition or socialism. To tolerate sweating is not simply to allow him to make the minimum of reasonable profit by paying far less than the minimum of reasonable wages; we ourselves have to make up those wages somehow or other by doles to his employees and their enfeebled children after them. We may comfort ourselves over the thought of fifty men competing each day for ten men's work, with the reflection that by trying to provide work for the unsuccessful forty we should sap the manly independence of them all. But we have none the less to do our best to prolong the futile lives of the unsuccessful competitors for the means of supporting those lives themselves. Again, if we decide that the drink trade has been burdened enough already, and that we cannot expect to make people moral by Act of Parliament, the fruit of our convenient refusal to interfere is the discovery that the crime, the disease, and the shiftlessness in the nation means more expense, unpleasantness, and even danger to every law-abiding and self-controlled citizen.

Hence the cry for some measure of reform is now raised by common prudence. But prudence, left

to herself, is a poor counsellor. The arguments she uses are apt to undermine the stoutest bulwarks of her own position. No great reform has ever been carried through by prudential considerations alone. Fear and self-love are weapons that break in the hand that uses them. Bid us rise and abolish some evil beneath whose shadow we have indolently dwelt, and we may prepare to bestir ourselves while the dread is upon us. But such emotions are short-lived; when they begin to grow weak, sluggishness and apathy slip back into their old place.

Financial loss and social ineffectiveness, however, are not the chief perils of the situation. It is when we brush these calculations aside that we can gauge our actual needs. The really important possessions which the social evils steal from us can never be bought for gold, nor recovered by any increase in rates or taxes. The weakening of the sense of moral obligation, the fading recognition of responsibilities, the disappearance of love, the death of neighbourliness and comradeship in the desperate struggle for existence or the crop-full content of the pensioners of the Poor Law—these constitute the real poverty of a nation; to escape from them any sacrifice of money would be cheap, if any sacrifice would avail.

The real problem does not arise from the fact that our submerged classes suffer from a chronic insufficiency of food and shelter and work; it is that their situation makes the enjoyment of human rights and the performance of human duties first difficult and then all but impossible. Unemployment does not simply mean an empty stomach in the man's body; if that were all, it might, for a time, be a blessing whose fruits others might envy.

It rots the backbone of the man's character. Overcrowding does not simply rob its victims of the air needed by their lungs, or the space and quiet necessary for their children's health; it familiarises them with things they should never see—vague phrases here are inevitable—until, at last, through the breaches in nature's fence of decency enter vices which we care neither to contemplate nor even to name. A bad system of charitable relief, whether public or private, is something more than a mistaken investment or a fruitless expenditure of money. It is worse even than pouring the wine of life down a drain-pipe. For, in that case, even if you lose the wine, the drain-pipe would be still undamaged. The real misfortune is that the gift which fills the recipient's hand empties his heart. You give him what will, for the present, supply some of his more obvious needs, but you rob him of the idea of supplying those needs for himself in the future, and you leave him with the sense of irresponsibility and dependence, the fertile mother of selfishness, apathy, and sloth.

Now what does all this mean? Simply that the social evils are a curse to society, because they destroy the very qualities that society needs. But the qualities that are needed are the qualities that build up the family. We have felt baffled at every turn of our investigation, because we have left the family out of sight. For the family, as we have seen, is a moral co-partnership, resting on the consciousness that each needs all and that all need each. Every member is responsible for making some contribution to the good of the whole, and this, not as a matter of obligation or contract, but in the way of pure and natural goodwill and affection.

The mere presence of need, disappointment, or sickness spontaneously rouses all the latent powers of comfort and assistance in the other members of the closely knit community, just as—to borrow a physical illustration—the presence of some alien matter in the blood summons all the phagocytes within reach for its destruction. Wherever family life exists, this mutual and ready response to every need within its borders is felt as a privilege not lightly to be surrendered. The entrance of outside help will only be allowed when the need outstrips the actual family resources. Otherwise, failure to resent it is a sure sign of the decay of that jealous affection without which the spirit of the family cannot survive.

If we understand the matter aright, it is against these very qualities in what we may call the organism of family life that the social evils, like so many malignant infections, make their attack. Certain members of the family become first unable and then unwilling to discharge their own special duties to the common well-being. The difficulties in the way of supplying the needs of life increase; inducements to have them supplied by others or to acquiesce in their neglect grow more numerous. Where dependence and helplessness follow poverty into the house, love grows restless and prepares to depart, and the brave partnership of the family is replaced by a selfishness that has forgotten its duties and therefore surrendered its rights.

If the family spirit is strong and healthy, these morbid influences will be resisted up to a certain point. The various social problems will not even be felt. The babies will be looked after by the mother's wise and constant care; the husband's

hours of leisure will be made happy by the bright faces of wife and children ; the father will see that the boys on leaving school are put to some useful trade ; the aged parents will be cared for by their own children. In such a house a prudent habit of saving will be natural. Unemployment or sickness, if they come, will be tided over. The temporary hardships involved will only bind the parents and children more closely to one another. Temptations to drink and vice will be unable to make themselves felt ; and the worst evils of bad housing will be avoided when everyone living in the house has learnt to think of it as home.

Such is the picture admiringly painted by those who love to remind us that " people may be poor, but they can be honest and they can be clean," or who are convinced that " want is always a sign either of weakness or wickedness." And such a picture is true of thousands of families who maintain with undaunted heroism a splendid struggle for decency and independence where social evils are most abundant. But even here, in the lives of these, the country's true aristocrats, there may come a point where resistance is overpowered. The stoutest cable can bear no more than a definite strain. Those who cry out that certain modern proposals are undermining the family do not always remember that three very grave perils have already been threatening the family for some time. First, modern industrial conditions are distinctly hostile to family life, through the widespread desire of employers to substitute the labour of women and even of children for that of men. With the results of this desire we are already familiar. An increasing number of women can be neither wives nor

mothers in the full sense of these honourable words; the boys are hurried off to unsatisfactory employments before they have learnt any of the lessons most needed for life; the girls are crowded in factories at the very age when they ought to be helping their mothers and preparing to rule homes of their own; and a growing proportion of men are coming to look to their own wives and children for their support. The wife must go out to work; the husband must stay at home to cook the dinner or mind the baby.

Secondly, it is not simply the moral basis of the family, but the family itself, which is invaded by the social evils. Nothing breaks up a home like prolonged unemployment, when all the cherished possessions are gradually alienated, and the husband, after tramping the neighbourhood in vain, at last goes off to find elsewhere, if not work, at anyrate relief from the sight of want or starvation in his own house. Nothing destroys the family so surely as the overcrowding which drives the children into the streets with all their dangerous fascinations, and teaches the father that the only place where he is welcome is the public-house. Evidence given before the recent Divorce Commission suggests that where men and women are cooped up together in the unhealthy closeness of our modern cities, there exist still worse dangers to assail the purities of family life.

Thirdly, the whole method of our present Poor Relief weights the scales against the family. To go "into the house" means for the great majority to be separated from those who are nearest to them; and to apply for out-relief means very often that the members of the less coherent family will have the distinct advantage in consideration from the

Guardians. In Scotland, the unmarried mother has privileges which are denied to the wife; and the widow who complains that her weekly allowance does not enable her to feed her children is told, possibly with some show of wisdom, that she must surrender one or more of them altogether. In any case, a system that can make no moral demands on its protégés, and that can legally do nothing except relieve destitution, being empowered to make no conditions as to its gifts, and never to follow up its own kindness and care, is obviously condemned to assist the weakening and paralysing influences which are already active in society.

VII. All this shows quite clearly what are the real evils which we have to encounter, namely, the destruction of the materials of family life, and the disintegration of the family itself. It also shows what must be the way of defence. As the Socialist leader, Mr J. R. Macdonald, has expressed it, the social unit to be protected is not the individual man and the individual woman, but the family. Equally clear is the reason for the inadequacy of so many of our well-meant and strenuous efforts after amelioration. We have tried to cure symptoms; we have not diagnosed the disease. We have tried to bale out the water from a plugged sink; we have not turned off the tap. We are impressed with the tragedy and wastefulness of teaching hungry and shoeless children in our schools, and we forthwith make arrangements to clothe and feed them. We sigh over the widespread lack of work; and we send men to agricultural colonies for a time or advocate economic changes to stimulate the demand for home manufactures; or we organise a great system of labour

exchanges, which shall inform all who are searching for work of its presence, or absence, in their neighbourhood. Or perhaps we are impressed with the ravages of intemperance, and forthwith agitate for the diminution of the number of centres of temptation. If houses are insanitary or decrepit, let them be put into fit repair or pulled down at once. If the helplessness of labour, the desire for swollen profits, or the pressure of foreign competition leads to dangerous conditions in factory or workshop, let us assert, on the statute book, that the safety of the operatives must be ensured at the expense of the employer. If land, imperatively needed for building, is held up, let us tax it more heavily and so drive it into the market. If the feeble-minded and criminal elements in the population are reproducing themselves with sinister fecundity, we must set ourselves to think out some system by which they can be rendered at least comparatively sterile.

In addition to all these attempts to make people clean and healthy, if not sober and moral, by legislation, we have two great classes of voluntary agencies in our midst: the younger has worked more or less in connection and sympathy with official admimistration, in Guilds of Help, City Aid Societies, After-Care Committees, associations for "following-up," and the like; and the older has hitherto organised private effort, independently of State assistance, in industry, consumption, and insurance by means of Trade Unions, Co-operative Societies, and Friendly Societies. By these means a work has been accomplished for which, at first, the State saw no necessity, and which, even later, the State itself could not have achieved. Yet, in

both these departments, the tendency is now clearly visible for the State to correlate these activities with her own, bringing them gradually into one large and comprehensive system ; [1] while a voluntary or unofficial agency can only hope to succeed when it takes itself as seriously as if it were a State institution.

Now the value of every one of these agencies cannot for a moment be denied. Even to criticise them or point out their inadequacy seems ungracious. Yet nobody believes that any one of them has been efficacious in reaching its aim. Whence the success of each—so far as success has been attained ? And whence their failure ? They have failed, or they are failing, just in so far as they are doing what they set out to do—to remedy some particular evil or bestow upon the needy some particular boon. They have succeeded just in so far as they have gone beyond their avowed aims, inspiring a new morality and hopefulness, and boldly making new attempts at the common good. For, just as it is a law of all economic progress that the interests and powers of the consumer must be thought of before those of the producer, so, in all questions of social amelioration, the reverse holds good. People must be taught to act, and act together, before they can usefully receive. When they have learnt this lesson they will solve for themselves many a problem which we shall never solve for them.

Thus we do not arrive at any real solution of the problem of feeding school children unless the number of children unfed at home steadily diminishes. We

[1] This is strikingly the case with the Children Act and the Insurance Act, and it will probably be a feature in any reform of the Poor Law.

gain no real victory for temperance if, with half the number of public-houses at our street corners, there are just as many men and women driven by misery or utter weariness or vice to the doors still left open. We have not seriously grappled with unemployment until we find that we have fewer unemployed men to deal with, and fewer employments which demand a reserve fund of unskilled and unorganised and irregular labour. On the other hand, directly social amelioration means a moral uplift—a new consciousness at once of duty and of the possibility of performing it—a real advance is made. Teach the harassed and ignorant mother how to feed her baby and keep her house tidy; let neither poverty nor monotony urge her to seek work outside; give the under-employed and deteriorating man a chance of regular work; make it possible and worth while to keep the children neat and the old people comfortable and well-cared-for, and to find other ways of amusement besides drink and unhealthy excitement, and you may expect the results of your work to last. But when you have done all that is possible you will find that you have merely been building up the family and inspiring those ethical qualities and arranging for those economic capacities without which family life is impossible, but with which it inevitably begins to function.

VIII. For permanent social advance, a deeper investigation of human nature is necessary than has generally been contemplated by reformers. They are perfectly right who assert that the soul of all reform is the reform of the soul. But if the soul is to be reformed we must understand the condition in which we find it, the form which we desire it to exhibit, and the external or material

influences which may affect it. "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." This is as true of the casual labourer as of the millionaire. Human beings, rich or poor, need not only to possess but to be in a position to act, and to be able, not only to act, but also to be. How far will the suggested plan further action and life? This is the real test of every reform.

Whether we believe with Wordsworth that we live by admiration, hope, and love, or with the New Testament (in whatever sense we take the words) that life is only reached through the door of faith in Christ, or whether we have any other theory on the subject, we must admit, first, that life, to be worth preserving or propagating, is more than mere existence; and, secondly, that the maintenance of such life depends on certain essential conditions whose presence it is our task to ensure. But what are those conditions? This is the all-important question. To answer it, we need more than a knowledge of prices, wages, rising or falling rents, model family budgets, statistics of pauperism, indoor and out. Not that we can afford to do without any of these. The lordliest cathedral needs the labour of the quarryman. But the quarryman could only give us a heap of stones unless he were preceded by the architect. The architect must know all about stones, but he must also know all about worship. And the social reformer must know all about men and women. His work must rest upon a sound psychology.

On such an investigation we have already been engaged in the preceding chapters. Let us now sum it up as it affects our present inquiry. In the first place, human nature is plastic, malleable,

always changing. No one starts out with a definite and unalterable amount of freedom or personality. Freedom and personality are prizes to be achieved, not original endowments. Everyone begins life, as he emerges from infancy, with a certain power of choice, as also with certain interests and capacities. The direction in which these will develop depends to a very large extent on training and surroundings. The exact extent it is impossible to determine, because we cannot guage the strength of congenital impulses and tendencies, bodily or mental.

It is quite certain, however, that between the body and the mind there is one strong similarity. The majority of children are born physically healthy; that is, given a normal amount of nourishment, fresh air, exercise, and protection from the extremes of heat and cold, the body will select from its environment what is needed to build it up into strength and health.[1] So with the mind; in the greater number of cases, at all events, if the requirements of a sound and healthy life are offered, the mind will select and use them. Give the child opportunities for affection, self-control, patience, pure and keen enjoyment, and it will seize them. Give the man opportunities for a cheerful home, provision for the future, toil for those who are naturally dependent on him, and love for his children, and he will take advantage of them all.

All this is true if three subsidiary rules are carried out. First, keep bad examples and evil suggestions as far away as possible. We naturally imitate what we see, from childhood upwards, without any consideration of its morality. Many a boy or girl has fallen into bad habits simply because

[1] See p. 204.

of the influence of suggestion. Secondly, encourage the right choice. No one is ever either too good or too bad for friendship and personal influence and exhortation. Thirdly, make it worth while to choose right. Children and adults alike need to be shown that it is to their interest to act well and not ill; and since (whether we relish the truth or not) we are most of us prone to follow the line of least resistance, we shall all be the better if we are driven to the conclusion that it is after all easier and simpler to do right and harder to do wrong.

A certain school of socialists is often accused of desiring to secure both comfort and industry by a series of cast-iron regulations which would reduce us all to the condition of impeccably precise and accurate machines. The accusation may be justifiable. Such an ideal is as old as the birth of bureaucracy. But life is too complicated to allow us ever to approach it. Administrative laws are like bodily habits. They do not destroy choice. They only set it free to enter fresh worlds and grapple with new alternatives. Our choice will always be called for. It is the power to choose right which must be drawn out and educated. We are not machines, automatically grinding out either goodness or badness. Nor do we produce spontaneously either figs or thistles. But if figs are desired it will be useless to affix them to barren branches, and then invite passers-by to pluck them off. The tree must be dug about and manured and tended. If, however, the soil is left to itself, we must not be surprised if such neglect condemns it to bring forth thistles and nothing else. In other words, the seed of good fruit is there; but it must be fertilised from the outside, or it will die.

But what is this save to say that the treatment which the State must provide is identical in spirit with that which is naturally found in genuine family life? There, the child is no sooner born than its surroundings are carefully selected and arranged. While it is helpless, everything is done for it by wise and loving hands. Then, as soon as conscious volition and choice appear, they are encouraged. Dangers, on the other hand, are seduously removed; knives and all things unsafe to eat are kept out of the way. The boy finds that he is expected to launch out on the waters of life for himself, but not before he has been taught how to sail; and he is not allowed where the waters are too high or boisterous.

This independence, however, involves its own opposite. To strike out for himself means to take his part as one of the crew, and he discovers to his surprise that older heads and stronger arms are unable to dispense with his own untired brain and muscles. As the years pass, larger duties are assigned, larger liberties allowed, yet even here the knowledge that certain things are distasteful to those he loves will keep him, not only from sin, but from the reach of temptation. At last, in full manhood, all semblance of coercion passes away; but in the new home which is now formed, certain alternatives are still weighted; chance desires and urgent passions, whose satisfaction none can authoritatively gainsay, are thrust aside by a loving reverence for the claims of those who are now dependent on him; and these claims will be the more fully recognised because they can at best be only partially enforced. Freedom has been trained and moulded into the perfection that springs from perfect service.

This is confessedly an ideal. Yet why, for being so, should it be banished to the skies? As a matter of fact, its dwelling is on earth. In every home where affection and wisdom are united we see it reproduced. Its essential features are there. And if its principles are sound, why confine them to the single family? If we may listen to the lessons of history already set before us, the line between family and community is hard to draw. The principles are the same in both. Does not the community need men and women whose freedom shall be achieved by the removal of dangers, the calling forth of decisions, and the growth into a life of membership in a larger whole? There is no profit in sighing, "this is too high for us, we must aim at something lower," when we are dealing with mankind. The aim, once dropped, sinks lower still. And when the bolder ideal is relinquished, the path of caution and timidity is found to be yet harder. The truest handmaid of progress is daring. It is by the audacity of its hopes that the medical profession has gained its greatest triumphs. The guide to its most brilliant discoveries has been the dream that some contagion might be wholly neutralised, and some disease stamped out. Such dreams fulfil themselves.

When we enter the worlds of morals and of religion, we find the line between disease and sin becoming increasingly hard to draw with firmness. Much of the most piteous suffering is caused by excess or neglect, either one's own, or another's. And the more crime and guilt are examined, the more they lead us back to some morbid diathesis, some congenital corruption or taint of blood which education, physical or mental or both, has failed to

sterilise, and which, meeting with some kindred evil outside, has blossomed into foul and poisonous maturity. The likeness between the physical and the moral is more than an analogy. It may be that we shall never free ourselves from laziness, drunkenness, and sexual vice, as we have freed ourselves from leprosy and small-pox, and as we shall perhaps free ourselves from consumption and cancer. But the possibilities of the removal of stumbling blocks on a large scale have never been tried. To some small extent the aristocratic corporations of ancient Greece turned the State into a great family. When the modern State has learnt to follow the methods, make the demands, and cherish the ideals that are perfectly understood in every well-ordered household, the preacher's work will be as different from what it is to-day as that of the modern doctor differs from the simple blundering practice of his grandfather.

Every attempt to take the more level path, or to follow a short-cut to reform, has ended in perplexity and confusion. Destitution is maintained. Unemployment saddens good years and terrifies bad ones. Crime and feeble-mindedness, prostitution and drink, walk hand in hand. Innocent children are still hurried into the grave in their first helpless months. But follow the more ambitious and patient track. Be beforehand with the causes of destitution—neglected childhood, sickness, and lack of work. Re-organise the industries whose demand for labour now fluctuates helplessly from month to month or from year to year. Let the budding criminal see that honourable work will pay better than crime, and the well-meaning but weak-minded youth learn that there are more satisfactory things

than the short-lived excitements of the streets. Show to ignorant mothers in the slums a way by which, even with their limited resources, their babies' lives may be saved; and you will wake up in men and women and in boys and girls the slumbering but divine sense of decency and order, of self-control and patience and service and love. The bravest and most exacting of all leaders taught his followers to pray, "lead us not into temptation." It is when the rough places are made plain, and the crooked ways straight, that the glory of the Lord is revealed.

This, then, must be the test for every scheme of reform. Does it remove temptation? Does it penalise idleness and dirt? Does it render the preservation of health easier? Will it create both ability and willingness to bear those responsibilities that every normal human being should cheerfully accept? To repeat, the true wealth of a nation can be measured by the number of healthy and loyal husbands and wives, parents and children and kinsfolk, neighbours and friends, who form her citizens. No reform that multiplies these, however costly, can be anything but cheap. Will it leave the sense of irresponsibility untouched? Will it leave men as ready to receive, but no readier to give? Then, however economical or alluring or popular either with socialist or individualist, it will be dear at any price. This is equally true, whether we think of old age pensions, free breakfasts for children, or medical aid for the invalided. Every gift is an investment, or it is a waste. The salt of all charity is encouragement. In the language of the economist, provision, like consumption, must be productive.

"Where the city of the faithfullest friends stands,
Where the city of the cleanliness of the sexes stands,
Where the city of the healthiest fathers stands,
Where the city of the best-bodied mothers stands—
There the great city stands." [1]

We are thus brought back to our two-fold conception of the family institution and the family spirit. To the experienced social servant, the destruction of the family means nothing less than "red ruin and the breaking up of laws." No one can give to the children the care which the parents give, when the parents are what they ought to be. No one can protect a wife from harassing and unnatural toil as thoroughly as a husband. The ministrations of the State to the aged are frigid and soulless compared with what can be accomplished by the kindly understanding of a son or daughter. A society which calls on the State to see to all this is as ridiculous as an engine which refuses to move unless the mechanic is constantly at work repairing it. But when the engine will not work, the mechanic must be called in. The glory of the mechanic is to make himself unnecessary. And if social legislation does its business, we shall have to look to it less and less.

The State will always be needed to supply those larger resources and opportunities for health, education, recreation, and physical and mental life which separate families can never adequately provide for themselves, and to protect from the dangers and disasters against which the more limited powers of individuals or family groups can never hope to insure. But the State must carry out all this in the spirit of the family. Its citizens must be recog-

[1] Walt Whitman, "Song of the Broad Axe."

nised as ends in themselves, not well-dressed figures in some vast pageant of industry. To see that their needs are supplied is only the first and less important task of the State. To see that each can play his part in supplying the needs of the richer life of the whole community is its great and inspiring duty.

IX. Such a view as this is strongly opposed to the philosophical individualism of Herbert Spencer. It is equally opposed to the system of a writer whose conception of the "general will" would have been almost unintelligible to Spencer. Professor Bosanquet, in his "Philosophical Theory of the State," follows and amplifies the views of T. H. Green. In general conformity with Green, he holds that society is an organism, "every superior and subordinate grouping therein having its own nature and principle, which determine its members as such, and every one, consequently, tending to impose upon its members a peculiar capacity or point of view, which, in so far as a given system is active, tends to put all other systems out of sight." [1] This would seem to be as true of the State as of the family, and it should make us the more eager for the State to become permeated with the spirit which, in our view, is natural to the normal family.

But Bosanquet then proceeds to ask, What are the limits of State action? He answers with Green, that it can only ordain and further external actions; but, he adds, in doing this, it can hinder hindrances. This power, however, demands the greatest caution. The common good must never be promoted by force, or the acts thus stimulated will be withdrawn altogether from the higher life and will be morally

[1] *Op cit.* p. 169. See also Green, T. H., "Works," ii. pp. 341 ff., 399 ff.

and socially worthless. Public action is of necessity an encroachment on the sphere of private initiative ; and it can only be justified if it liberates resources of character and intelligence by which the encroachment is outweighed. Thus, to remove a family out of a bad house into a good one is an error, unless a moral struggle for cleanliness and decency is being fought by the family already ; in this case, the external " dead-lift of interference " may be employed to remove some otherwise fatal obstacle. If there is no such struggle, the family, as it would seem, must be left to disease, helplessness, and degradation.

If this is so, the analogy between the State and the family breaks down at the crucial point. No well-constituted family would ever treat an unsatisfactory member as Bosanquet suggests that this unhappy household should be treated. The duty of removing an obstacle which is damming up the stream of goodwill and endeavour is as obvious as it is pleasant. The real problem, the test of wisdom and of love alike, is to attack the indolence and ill-will within the heart itself. Unless the family has already ceased to be a family in anything but the name, the prodigal is not given up, but patiently waited for and wooed back to the old home. As for the State, if we look at the matter from the lowest point of view, can any community afford to despair even of its least satisfactory members in this fashion ? It has something else to think about besides securing or avoiding the moral reformation of defaulters. Certain standards of hygiene and decency must be maintained ; otherwise, the loss suffered by the community as a whole will be a heavy fine to pay for the refusal to secure social conduct by compulsion.

But who shall say when this perilous "dead-lift of interference" really begins? Few families, and few individuals, have actually sunk to the level of the beasts that perish, not only giving up the struggle for goodness, but refusing to renew it under any circumstances. Supposing we say, "we will put you in a house where you can be clean, and we will make it as difficult as we can for you to be dirty," or, "we will keep you as far as possible from temptation to intemperance by removing from the sale of alcohol the stimulus of private profit"; this may be the one thing needed to rouse new hope and determination. To decide that for a given case goodness is only possible under compulsion, and therefore that the case shall be left alone, is not only dangerous; it is presumptuous. And since, in a modern State, no case can be left alone altogether, it is sheer folly.

Bosanquet would seem to have already answered his own contention by his doctrine of the general will. This general will, in whose existence he firmly believes, and which indeed is essential to the continuity of a State, he defines as follows: "It is that identity between any particular will and the wills of all my associates in the body politic which makes it possible to say that in all social co-operation, and in submitting even to possible constraint when imposed by society in the true common interest, I am obeying only myself and am actually attaining my freedom."[1] Neither Bosanquet nor any one else would assert that this general will is perfect in all or even in most members of the community. But if it means anything, it must be more than an abstraction; it must have some existence in the minds of the great

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 107.

majority at least. It must be capable of formulation, of enforcement, of progress, or it is no will at all. It may have recourse to compulsion; but the whole force of Bosanquet's fine conception consists in the fact that this compulsion is never purely external. Unless the general will is after all only a will of some, and not of others, there is, even in the recalcitrant and rebellious, an element of acquiescence in its decisions; and when that will is disobeyed, and punishment follows, that punishment, as Bosanquet himself says, is nothing but the vindication of the individual; it is his *right* to be punished! Hence, the clear-cut opposition between the external and the internal disappears. At most, it is a matter of degree. There can be no mere "dead-lift of interference." Even by compelling right acts and preventing the performance of wrong ones, the community is widening the empire of the general will, and setting itself to

> "Build within the mind of man
> The empire that abides."

Thus interpreted, the position represented by Bosanquet is less widely separated from what would seem to be its opposite. "It is all a matter of wages. Give people more, and they will act better." As we have already observed, higher wages can no more solve the problem by themselves than can the better houses, larger meals, or more suitable clothing which we hope they will procure, or the penalties by which we may try to banish unsocial conduct from our midst. Once we recognise, however, that it is not our business to implant the germ of good, but to set it free, and to train those social instincts which we could never have created, both penalties

(if they are fastened on guilty shoulders) and inducements (if they are held out before eager hands) have their place. A sluggish will (and no will is free from sluggishness) needs both the goad and the promise. Both will be successful in so far as the general will sets itself to evoke with sympathy, wisdom, and patience, the kindred response of discipline and service.

For such an object no enthusiasm can be too intense, no patience too calm and assured. No one can be a patriot or a lover who has not learnt how to sacrifice himself for the object of his passion. Such self-surrender is the only true self-fulfilment. To impart this spirit, this ἦθος, is the true function of the State. If she would perform it aright, she must remember that she is an organisation, not of individuals, but of groups of individuals, of families. And she must be herself a family on the largest scale, controlling wayward desires, shielding from penury and too severe temptation, securing the chance of a good life for all, and ever calling for morality, affection, and joyous self-devotion to her own gracious and majestic will.[1]

[1] Compare Barnett, S. and H., "Towards Social Reform," p. 86. "True reforms will only reach their end when the individuals of a community realise the high relationship—the 'religion'—which binds them together as members of a family, in which it is the common concern that each one's capacity, each one's talent, each one's life, should be raised to the highest conceivable level." See also Eucken, R., "Life's Basis and Life's Ideal," p. 120.

CHAPTER X

THE IDEALS OF RELIGION

I. We have thus seen that the ethical conception of goodness is inseparable from the principle which underlies the foundation on which all our society is built up, the family. Without that principle, rules of conduct are either prudential maxims or unverifiable and abstract commands. With it, goodness is seen to be like health; the good man keeps his action in constant relation to the community or communities of which he is a member, just as each limb of the body, in normal health, functions in accordance with the needs of the whole organism. It is this conception which transcends both the psychological limitations of Kant's categorical imperative, and the perplexing antitheses of Spencer's egoism and altruism. It finds a place for all that is valuable in the theories founded either on the moral sense or on sympathy. It admits that a man may rightly act, as a good man constantly does act, from a consideration of what he feels to be his interest; and it discovers in the mind of the normal man an intuition both of the nature and the necessity of right conduct.

We have also found this principle indispensable for the understanding both of economics and of social reform. Without a grasp of the idea of some common good, with which each man, when left to himself, will naturally identify his own happiness,

but to which he is constantly tempted by the demands and prizes and threats of commercial and industrial life to be false, economics becomes indeed a dismal science, unfolding before our saddened eyes a spectacle of waste, jarring desires, and chaos. Similarly, all efforts at social reform which take no account of this idea must either lose themselves in harsh and deterrent measures, or they must sink to a weak and soul-destroying attempt to supply needs which never can be rightly supplied save by the trained and patient and co-operative activity of the family. No measure of social amelioration can hope to succeed which does not recognise that the family is the one social unit, and that the family alone can make possible in any complete form the true goodness or healthiness of conduct, namely, the alliance for the pursuit of worthy objects between the individual and his immediate neighbours.

But there is another great institution in human life on which we have hardly touched—religion. We have simply referred to its existence, in the earliest stages of human history, and claimed it as an ally for our view of the rise of morals. But religion, it has often been alleged, is actually opposed to the institution of the family; and this for two reasons. In the history of religions, and most of all in the case of Christianity, this opposition has constantly shown itself; and by its very nature religion can brook no rival authority; its word is "yea, yea, and nay, nay"; it will have no compromises; and therefore the family must learn to abate its claims and acknowledge a goodness higher than that of its own ideal and basis.

But these charges demand attention. First,

has religion, as a matter of history—has even Christianity—been hostile to the family?

Christ, we are reminded, certainly claimed to exercise an authority higher than the authority of the family. The decalogue may have commanded the pious Israelite to honour his father and his mother; but Christ bade a man be ready to leave his father and his mother; "whoever loves father or mother more than me," he said, "is unworthy of me." He came not to bring peace but a sword, and to bring this sword into the very abode of peace, the family; to set parents and children at variance with one another, thus reversing the old prophetic promise of the messenger of the Lord who should turn the hearts of the fathers to the children. His first disciples were called to separate themselves as completely from their families as from their business. In doing this they were only fulfilling his own example; when his mother and his brothers were not willing to concede his claims, he at once turned his back upon them; and when they pursued him and endeavoured to induce him to return to his home, concluding that he was carried away by some new enthusiasm, he calmly repudiated his relationship with them, and was ready to replace them in his affections by anyone who would follow his teaching. His whole system, we are told, rested on an individualism which found no place for the family, and which has given to the religion founded by him a predominantly anti-social character. For salvation, it is only necessary to believe on him; and at the judgment which, as he foretold, he was going to pronounce over all nations at the last, the only question would be, what had been the individual's attitude to himself?[1]

[1] All this has been vigorously stated in Sturt, H., "The Ideal of a

Nor is this all; whatever we may think about the ethical character of such teaching as this, his followers, we are told, have certainly acted upon it. From the first, the new religion has separated the mother from the child, the maid from her betrothed. The exalted and austere love of heaven has always been challenging the more gracious and kindly love of earth. Even after religion has succeeded in permeating a society, so that they who dwell in a house are made to be of one mind, every revival of religion has caused a repetition of the old divisions. The father has cursed his child, and brothers have taken arms against one another or doomed one another to the fires of hell. As if that were not enough, men and women have been summoned to the desert or the mountain to find a sanctity impossible in their homes; and the companionship of kinsfolk has been flung off in unnatural preference for the cloistered community of the monastery. The most sacred intimacy of the family life has been banned as a thing of unavoidable and inherent impurity and sin; and the term "religious" has been denied to all, over a great part of Christendom, save those who have taken on them the vows of celibacy, and have abjured the family for ever.

It is urged, further, that all this is repeated whenever a heathen land is entered by Christian missionaries. The old traditional stabilities are

Free Church," pp. 253, 283. "The first and truest Christians were fanatics looking for the speedy coming of that kingdom wherein there should be no marrying or giving in marriage. . . . Adopt and enrich Christianity as we will, the original taint clings to it. . . . Thousands of homes have been desolated by religion, childhood blighted, family duties neglected, consciences warped, the sentiments of public spirit and patriotism eradicated like noxious weeds." Sturt would doubtless regard the pathetic narrative of "Father and Son" as an illustration of his contention.

broken up. The family sanctions are discountenanced and ridiculed; and the young are lured into schools where they are taught to despise the beliefs and the authority of their parents. Nor is the power of the old family life, when once destroyed, easily replaced by the new laws announced by the foreigner. No wonder, our critics add triumphantly, that the Christianised or semi-Christianised native is a disheartening and disastrous failure.[1]

Other religions, it is urged, have shared in the guilt of this treachery to the deepest human instincts. Buddhism has certainly gone as far as Christianity in enforcing the monastic ideal. In Burma, at least, every respectable family is expected to send its boys for a certain period of time into a monastery. Pagan religions, the argument proceeds, which have existed before the invention of the monastic ideals, or have remained in ignorance of them, have perpetrated crimes not less enormous. Modern travellers tell of parents, compelled by the tyrannous decision of some witch-doctor, to surrender an only child as a sacrifice to some hideous divinity of the forest. Lucretius has related in words of undying horror the slaughter of Iphigeneia at the call of religious fanaticism and the cruelty of the priests. "To deeds so foul was religion the guide!" And to-day, in every Christian church, is read the story of Abraham's journey to offer his only son upon the altar at the divine command.

[1] See Kidd, Dudley, "The Essential Kaffir," p. 232; Thomson, B., "The Fijians," p. 237, and Evans, M. S., "Black and White in S. Africa," pp. 95 ff, 107 ff. It must also be remembered that primitive customs do not always make for morality. For instance, the men's club-house, sometimes a preservative of continence, may have the opposite effect. *Cf.* Merker, H., "Die Masai," pp. 82 ff, and Christian, F. W., "The Caroline Islands," p. 155.

Such is the nature of the argument drawn from the actual history of religion. And it is easy to pass to the second and more abstract argument. The higher and purer a religion, the more decidedly, it would seem, must that religion oppose the family. It is only the highest religions that claim a universal supremacy for their deities. But if that supremacy is universal, the family must submit to it. Every religion must repeat the claims of Christ; every prophet must urge them on behalf of his divine master. The saint must sit light to everything on earth but the law of his god; and if his god is content to be served on any other terms, he cannot be worth the worship paid to him. The religious man must feel himself to be a stranger and pilgrim; to have no abiding city on earth; and nothing will more effectively wean him from his high calling than the love of wife or child. Did not Bunyan's pilgrim find it necessary to tear himself from their embrace as resolutely as Regulus forced aside his weeping friends when he returned to the torture chamber at Carthage, or as Buddha plunged into his ascetic life in the forest?

II. In some minds, however, these arguments will leave an uneasy feeling. Granted that it is difficult to answer them, is there not something on the other side? Can we not find many parallels to the fourth commandment of the Decalogue even in the New Testament? Is it not the duty of the Christian himself to provide for his own family? Has not religion always given the sanctity of its ceremonial to both marriage and baptism? Can it be that religion, then, is at one with its most determined enemies in regarding the family as of no abiding worth? Or are we meant to conclude,

with the Church of Rome, that the family life is permissible to the ordinary man and woman, but that for true holiness it must be abjured with as thorough a hatred and as deep-rooted a fear as actuated Plato in his daring construction of a model community?

The difficulty is a real one—none the less real because, in the Protestant churches, at least, comparatively few persons have ever felt its force. If we are to face it, however, we must go back a little further, and instead of considering the attitude which religion has assumed to the family at certain times, we must ask ourselves what is the place of religion in human life. This large question leads us inevitably back to that dim region in which we tried to discover the beginnings of the family. We need not, however, spend quite so long there at present. It will be enough to notice the chief theories which have attempted to explain the origin of the majestic phenomenon, and see what is implied by the most probable among them.

Was religion derived originally from fear? This would not be unnatural. Surrounded by powers of which he knows nothing except that they are capable of dealing out disaster and sudden death, plunged every night into the weird terrors of darkness, and living in a vain show, what could be more natural than that primæval man should shriek out his impotent submission to the awful unknown? Only the advance of science can liberate men from the craven dread which first produces and then lives upon religion.[1]

But to this plausable argument, urged with passionate earnestness by Lucretius when the pagan

[1] See p. 83, footnote.

creed in which he had been suckled was almost outworn, there is a ready reply. Savage religion is not saturated with terror. In the very paganism which Lucretius spurned, later writers—perhaps not really less valuable authorities—have found the spirit of sweetness and light; and though even Greece knew the abominations of human sacrifice, yet the Red Indians on the American plains and the negroes of the Central African forests, equally with the Israelites in the early days in Canaan, have celebrated their religious festivals with unfeigned rejoicing, and have invited their gods with open hearts to share their happiness.[1] If a god is simply an object of fear, why should he be asked to help? Fear might make a demon, never a god. Moreover, fear, like selfishness and pain, isolates; religion is essentially a matter of common action,[2] especially in its earlier stages. Dread never called men together, except to the confused inactivity of a flock of sheep. The birth of a common hope is the signal for every alliance. No political or industrial combination has ever had the least chance, either of success or even of existence, until the dangers against which it is to be formed, however overwhelmingly, are felt to occupy something less than the whole field of attention. Faith and loyalty must march together; and when these prepare for a common struggle, fear is already dying.

Again, it is difficult to believe that religion begins in magic, in spite of the powerful advocacy of the veteran anthropologist, J. G. Frazer. Magic invokes supernatural aid for a definite purpose,

[1] See M'Clintock, W., "The Old North Trail," chaps. v., xxi., etc.

[2] This point can be seen suggestively worked out by King, I., "Development of Religion," chaps. v. and viii.

and by a secret ceremony. It is the attempt to supplement individual ignorance and impotence in satisfying individual needs and desires. True, the line between magic, so understood, and religion, is not always easy to draw. Religion will often use quasi-magical ceremonies or degenerate into magic, as with the Todas and other peoples who display reversion to an earlier type of thought. Or it may take over the practices and hopes of magic.[1] But religion cannot be understood apart from communion with some deity; of this, magic knows nothing; nor is it easy to imagine the process which Frazer is driven to postulate, namely, that after magic had been tried and had, not unnaturally, failed, men turned to religion and began to ask from the unseen, by simple prayer and sacrifice, gifts which incantations and mysterious rites had not secured. The reverse order, from prayer to spell, is far more widely attested.[2]

On the other hand, it is urged, the savage is everywhere found with a belief in spirits which may best be called animism.[3] These spirits may be good or bad, powerful or weak, the spirits of the departed members of his clan, or of actual living or inanimate things around him; the simplicity and the complexity of the belief lie in the fact that

[1] See Gardiner, A. H., in "Transactions of the Oxford Congress on Religions," ii. 209. A magical action is there defined as one performed by men on their own behalf or on behalf of other living persons, the attainment of the object depending on the will of the agent alone. See also Hobhouse, *op. cit.*, ii. 22.

[2] See, however, Marrett, R. R., "The Threshold of Religion." Fowler, W. Warde, "The Religious Experience of the Roman People," pp. 56, 57, points out that whatever there was originally in common between magic and religion among the Romans, the State took the utmost pains to eliminate all magical practices and ideas from its public and family cultus. The same is precisely true of Hebrew religion.

[3] *Cf.* p. 111.

his whole relation to the unseen is dominated by these important but invisible existences, which are as the sands of the seashore for multitude. Animism is thus, in many cases, little different from the religion of brute fear already discussed. It is a term, however, which describes the belief of the savage better than it describes his religion.[1] Religion is not merely an attitude to the unseen, but an attitude of a certain kind. Animism, unlike religion, is often quite devoid of the suggestion of any ethical element. We cannot consider it for any length of time without perceiving that, as a general rule, the attitude of a savage to the spirits varies greatly. To some he naturally turns for help in difficulty or pain; from others he simply tries to keep clear; some he thinks of as turning their benevolent or it may be stern regard upon the whole tribe to which he belongs; others wait to be consulted by him privately, or with the help of some special intermediary, some "witch of Endor."

For this reason the beginning of religion has been sought by others in ancestor worship. The spirits to whom the savage looks with reverence are those of his departed and venerated kinsmen. And it is true that this worship is found with extraordinary frequency, stretching, it may be said, over the whole of China, the greater part of Southern Africa, and perhaps the Central and Northern portions also; and dominating the religion of the Red

[1] For a full discussion of this subject, see Macdougall, W., "Body and Mind"; and compare Verg. Æn., viii., 349 ff.

> Iam tum religio pavidos terrebat agrestes
> Dira loci, iam tum silvam saxumque tremebant.
> Hoc nemus, hunc, inquit, frondoso vertice collem
> (Quis deus incertum est) habitat deus.

Indians, who once filled the continent of North America. Many other peoples, who do not habitually speak of their gods as ancestors, often use language which implies that the bond between them was really one of birth.

If this were true, we should need to go no further; it would be sufficiently clear that religion, so far from being a foe to the family, was its guarantee and sanctification. But we cannot quite venture upon this affirmation. It is easy to suppose that, because religion is in many cases a distinctly family affair, its gods must have been originally human progenitors. But what of the cases where the gods belong to the whole tribe, or are thought of as having a wider jurisdiction still? Many of the lower religions come nearer to a vague monotheism, coupled with a belief in demons; and the very religions which contain the element of ancestor worship often exhibit also a belief in one or more higher gods. To say nothing of its inapplicability to the higher religions of the world, the theory of ancestor worship thus seems unable to explain some of the instances which first suggested its formation. And, in addition to this, we should once more have to ask, how are the ancestors worshipped? With what feelings are they approached, and what is expected of them? How does the ancestor become a god, or what principle of selection has lifted some ancestors into gods, and depressed others to the level of existences, possibly dangerous, but certainly not divine?

All this makes it clear that in considering religion, we need to discover its spirit as well as its object. What is the psychological impulse which spurs men to religion, and what are the experiences with which

it is carried through? To this question, two sets of answers have been given. Religion is the expression of the emotion roused either by the supreme vital functions and their outward signs and manifestations, or by the seasonal changes of the year with all their vast importance for the food supply; it centres around the "crises" of physical life, such as birth, marriage and death; or round the solemn acts of ploughing, sowing, harvesting, and the like. Or again, religion is the expression of the social instincts; it crowns all the acts by which men celebrate or symbolise their common origin and needs and fears and activities; it is the bond of tribal union, and the corner-stone of the stability of every State. There is much that is valuable in both these statements, though they can hardly both be adequate expressions of the truth. Religion cannot be a matter purely for the community and its interests, or purely for the individual and his experiences. The two theories meet, where individual and community meet, in the family.

This does not, of course, mean that religion had its origin in the life of the family, any more than it means that religion was at first directed to departed ancestors. Religion, like the tribe, meets us before the family, in our modern sense, has come into existence, or, at any rate, when the family is merely emerging out of a system of marriage groups within the tribe, and when the tribe itself is regarded as one large and classified body of kinsmen. What is meant is something a little more subtle. From all we know of early religion, it is to be traced with considerable confidence to what can best be called the family side of both tribal and individual life. The great crises of puberty, marriage, parent-

hood, and death are the very moments when the individual is most conscious that he does not stand alone, but that his life is inextricably intertwined with that of a group of human and divine beings within his universe, the tribe. Gatherings for the holding of festivals or the performance of ceremonial religious rites are the seasons when the kinship of the whole tribe is most clearly felt — when it is definitely one large family. The prayers and sacrifices which accompany the start on a hunting expedition, the outbreak of hostilities, or the invasion of some calamity or pestilence, are the occasions on which each man feels most deeply the presence of combined effort, mutual responsibility, common need, or wide-spread terror. In this characteristic lies one deep-rooted distinction between religion and magic. Magic is the resort of the individual, neglected or discountenanced by the community. Religion is the great interest of the community, and in it all the full members of the community have an equal share.

If we are right in this account of the primæval religious attitude, religion itself will flow, like ethics, from the very constitution of mankind. Man, it is abundantly clear, is a social being ; and every impulse to social life, rightly understood, is an impulse to religion. By the sheer physical and psychical conditions of his existence, at every period of his life and in every age and clime, he is united to his fellows. He cannot live alone. But this union manifests itself, not merely in combined effort for food, safety, or enjoyment, but in the recognition of a spiritual bond, in a common faith, and, even for the most rudimentary societies, in a common obedience to the unseen power whose will

holds tribe and clan together. Without this recognition of an unseen power, it will be generally admitted there can be no religion, unless we are to make an exception in favour of Buddhism, a system which is as religious in practice as it is atheistic in theory. "Religion is the effective desire to be in right relations with the power manifesting itself in the universe."[1] The most careful students of religion have been led to definitions of it corresponding to this formula. Eduard Meyer has recently laid it down that religion differs from magic in holding to the idea of constant and permanent relations between men and certain spirits either universal or locally limited; that is, with some permanent personality. The startling fact is that the belief in such a personality, and the desire to be in a right relation to it, appear to be universal. Not less startling is the fact that both belief and desire are found uniting men in common actions and interests; that is to say, they lie at the basis of the State.

Does this mean, then, that the original religion of mankind was monotheism? This would be too much to assert without a far more searching examination of the data. Most anthropologists believe that the earliest man believed in a crowded animistic pantheon, some members of which naturally obtained a larger share of respect than others; though Waitz-Gerland holds that negroes, imagined to be fetichists or animists, are on the borders of monotheism, and that, in general, the uncultured races are nearer to monotheism than the cultured, both in belief and practice. Nor would anyone venture to assert that raw savages could ever form

[1] Fowler, W. W., *op. cit.*, p. 8: quoted from Ira W. Howerth.

the idea of an invisible, omnipotent, and eternal creator and ruler of the universe. The savage, like most of his civilised brothers, is too much occupied about his immediate and pressing needs to speculate about the Absolute. Still, we often hear of a belief in a far-off and shadowy maker of the world; this is found, for instance, almost over the whole of Central Africa, and appears among the North American Indians and in some of the Australian tribes. In higher religions it is, of course, familiar in one form or another. And when this belief is absent, we constantly come upon the "henotheistic" state of mind which was in all probability that of the ancient Israelite; "there may be any number of gods in existence; there is only one, or one paramount deity, with whom I and my clan have to do." This may not be the monotheism of Theistic philosophy, of Judaism, or of Islam; but it has the root of the matter in it none the less. It is very difficult to see how a single god could expel from the reverence or fear of his worshippers a number of others who were all of them previously on a practical equality with himself. If, on the other hand, monotheistic belief, however vague, was original, it is easy enough to understand the kind of superstition which could concentrate attention on the more urgent blessings or terrors for which the spirits or "godlings" in a man's immediate neighbourhood were responsible, whether such spirits were connected with the corn, the cattle, or the pestilence; and equally easy to see how, as a once isolated tribe came into closer touch with other tribes, the gods of the stranger would be welcomed into its growing assemblage of divinities.

III. As we pass on to the better known races,

we are on increasingly firm ground. The partial or half-conscious monotheism just noticed is liable to be broken up ; but as soon as the family is definitely distinguished from the tribe, we meet with the family worship and the family altar ; and the object of this worship is either a single deity or a group of deities who, for practical purposes, may almost be regarded as one individual. The father or the grandfather is the priest ; members of the family, and no others, are summoned to the celebration. In every one of the civilisations discussed in Chapter II., family life centres round religion. Every writer agrees that the Hindu household is a distinctly religious community. Individuals may go on distant pilgrimages or offer sacrifices in the nearest temple as they please ; family worship is essential, unless a man wishes to become an outcaste, or a Christian. The whole weight of Chinese religion, again, rests on the continuity of family worship, for the neglect of which no amount of individual piety could conceivably avail.

In Greece and Italy, again, the object of religious worship was to secure the continuity of the family, or to be secured by it, even more than to establish the safety of the State. The three hundred men who faced the Persians at Thermopylæ were all married. They might die. Their family worship was safe. On Roman lips, the very word "pius," as every reader of Virgil is aware, denotes duty to parents and reverence to the household gods. As Hearn has expressed it, in the Aryan household "the tie between the members was neither blood nor contract, but community of domestic worship." The household was "an association founded on religious belief and contemplating religious objects."

"The theory upon which it rested was the paramount and continuous obligation of ancestral worship. The practical object at which it aimed was the regular and proper performance of the *sacra*, that is, of the worship peculiar to the household." [1] The very story of Iphigeneia, like those of Antigone and Orestes, really shows how fully religion recognised and rested upon family ties. To demand the sacrifice of an only child for the sake of a man's nation or descendants is to exalt fatherhood to the skies.

One distinction, however, must be carefully drawn. Family worship is not ancestor worship. The object of the veneration of family religion is not necessarily an ancestor, either in ancient Rome or modern England. True, the tutelary deity may easily come to be identified with an original ancestor, just as all early archæology comes to rest in the thought of an eponymous hero, a Germanus, a Brutus, an Asshur, and even an Esau or Ham. But the ancestor who is worshipped is always a mythical or semi-mythical being, used to explain the existence of the cult. The cult itself, like the family, is always far older than the supposed ancestor. Its origin is to be discovered in the family sentiment which finds its fullest expression at the moments when the deepest hopes and fears move within the mind, and which has grown with every advance in the organisation of human society.[2]

[1] Hearn, W. E., "Aryan Household," p. 62.

[2] Fowler (*op. cit.* p. 70) holds that in ancient Roman society the religion of the "familia" "is not the worship of the idea of kinship expressed in some dimly conceived common ancestor": it is "a religion of practical utility, of daily work, of struggles with perils to which the shepherd and the tiller of the soil are liable." What is true of Rome here is true of a large part of early society. It must be remembered that "familia" means the household, including its dependants.

It is thus quite clear that where the family is strongest, religion is strongest also. The influence of the one means the influence of the other. The great states of the middle period of human history have been, in actuality, aggregations of families. The worship of the State has been nothing else than a family worship in which families themselves have taken the place of individual worshippers.

Some will be inclined to ask at this point, " Does all the foregoing discussion really concern us ? Other religions may or may not have assigned much importance to the family. What does matter is the attitude of Christianity. Other religions are false ; it is true. Other religions are natural ; it is revealed. We should therefore confine our attention to Christianity. If Christianity finds a place for the family, all attention paid to the family in other religions is, for us, superfluous ; if it does not, all beside will be of no avail."

Into the actual relation of Christianity to other religions, or into the question of its origin, as distinct from that of other religions, it is not our present purpose to enter. To some minds, Christianity may seem to gain by being as unlike other religions as possible ; to others, a purely " natural " origin for religion in general would throw doubt on the possibility of a divine origin for Christianity. What cannot be denied, however, is that, first, however far back we may trace the history of primitive religion, it needs, like life itself, some kind of starting point, and that, however simple its first stages, it has shown itself capable of surprising developments ; and secondly, that whatever sense we attach to the term revelation, the characteristic ideas of Christianity are foreshadowed, " prophesied," so to

speak, in the religion of Israel; and that the religion of Israel, again, touches that of other races at a thousand points. Perhaps, to the wise, this will appear to be rather an honouring of religion as a whole than a degradation of Christianity. We do no real service to Christianity, the religion pre-eminently of the Son of Man, if we imagine that God, who has never "left Himself without witness," could doom to hopeless and fatal ignorance of all truth everyone outside the actual range of the preaching of the Christian doctrines. In any case, the connexion between Christianity and other faiths is there. Prayer, forgiveness, sacrifice, and communion between worshippers both in cult and in obedience—to name only a few of the more familiar instances—show that Christianity was the culmination rather than the antithesis of ethnic ideals. Strong as this connexion shows itself, it is nowhere stronger then when we consider the place of the family in the sphere of religious conceptions.

Let us look first of all at the Old Testament. The religion of Israel, it is quite clear, was rooted in Semitic ideas. The society of the early Hebrews was like that of the Arabs, made up of families joined into clans. Each family had its worship; the dying out of a house in Israel was a calamity; it meant the impoverishment of Israel's God. The great festivals were really family celebrations. This is strikingly true of the three great agricultural festivals, Passover, which combined the offering of the firstlings and the beginning of the earlier or wheat harvest; Weeks, which closed the earlier harvest; and Tabernacles or "Tents," which closed the later harvest. At the Passover the father always presided. During Tabernacles, each family

used to picnic together in tents. Some of the most beautiful Hebrew poems sing the praise of family life; and through all the centuries of exile, the Jewish people has been held together, more than by law or circumcision or Sabbaths, by the holy and immemorial institution of the family.

But this is not all. Religion, to the Jew, was not simply a matter of the family institution, but of the family spirit. Jehovah was the father; Israel itself was the child; or, to borrow an even more favourite figure in the prophets, Jehovah was the husband, Israel was the bride—often unfaithful and adulterous, but still loved and pursued. This can mean nothing but that Israel was itself, in relation to Jehovah, one great family. Would Israel learn her true attitude to her God? She had but to look at the life of any one of her homes. All the attributes of God in the Old Testament are patriarchal. In the great catalogue of virtues which we find in Job, chap. xxxi., one of the noblest passages in the whole of the Bible, the author brings his ideal of a good man, a great house-father, as near as he dares to the performance of the functions of God. This is equally true of the action which religion expects between man and man. There is no need, in this place, to emphasise the ethical demands of the prophets. A religion which does not accomplish social righteousness is no religion at all in their eyes. Micah has for all time summed up this ethical demand of God as an insistence on justice, mercy, and humility before God. But how is all this to be conceived of except by applying to the nation the thoughts and feelings of brothers to one another, and the daily practice of a pure and beautiful household?

The piety of the Old Testament is "pure religion

breathing household laws." Justice is the due distribution of common goods among all the inmates of the house or members of the community, which can only be made when mere arithmetical calculation is absorbed by love; mercy is the ready sympathy and helpfulness which goes out to every mute call of need or weakness. Both can only be exercised without danger where, as in the family, the recognition of mutual responsibility is aimed at; both are kind "even to the unthankful and the evil." "To each according to his needs; from each according to his powers." This is the fundamental household law. To the gentile or heathen mind it might seem as foolish to bestow the first as to expect the second; but where both justice and mercy to men were bound together by humility before God, obedience and faith alike impelled the religious man to the venturesome proceeding, and made him sure of success. This is indeed one of the great laws of human nature; the spirit of the family is infectious. Like all wisdom hidden from the prudent and revealed unto babes, it is nowhere set forth with such clearness as in the writings of men of Jewish birth. We cannot treat a man as a brother without, at least, rousing the latent consciousness of brotherhood in his breast. What we persist in regarding him, that, in the end, he will become. And the brotherhood with which we thus resolutely credit him is not simply to be born in the future; it is there already; and that, not because of our relation to him, but God's. "One is your father, and all ye are brethren." There is the true guarantee for all the law and the prophets.

The old solidarity of the Hebrew state was broken up by the exile. The discovery that the fathers

had eaten sour grapes and that the children's teeth were set on edge produced an individualism of which Amos and Isaiah seem never to have dreamed. Before, the nation or the family had been the real religious unit, subject alike of the prophets' denunciations and the commands of the law. Now, it was felt that all separate souls belonged to God. "The soul that sinneth, *it* shall die." But this conception never for an instant weakened the consciousness that the community was the real child of God. In the social and religious life that followed the years of exile, the family and the household attained a new prominence, and patriotism glowed with a new fervour when it was touched with the religious gratitude for a second deliverance from the snare of the fowler. As subjects of such a deliverance, indeed, the Jews became convinced that a destiny of even greater splendour, undreamt-of before, now awaited them. Whether in joy or sorrow, the Psalmists passed without an effort and, as it would seem, unconsciously, from their own personal experiences to the memories and anticipations of the flock of Jehovah's pasturing.

In the period between the Testaments, this process developed. Adversity, as hammer-like and stern as the exploits of Judas Maccabeus, showered its blows upon the Jews, until the thought of duties to a man's self almost disappeared from their ethics and the longing for individual salvation from their religion. Even where a Protestant, nourished on the hope of saving his own soul alive, fancies that he meets it in his reading of apocryphal and apocalyptic books, he is startled to find, in the very same context, passages which can only be under-

stood if God is thought of as a father whose undistinguishing regard is cast on all the children of the chosen race. Indeed, unless we recognise this, we shall do great injustice to the Jewish writings, canonical and uncanonical alike. The attitude of God there described has often been criticised as partial, capricious, unworthy. So it is bound to seem, unless we remember, what the Jew could never forget, that God was the father of his people, that His conduct was therefore governed by the great law of fatherhood, and that He was bound to fight for them against every external foe and against every element of weakness or sin in their midst.

IV. All this may seem, to some readers, of only antiquarian interest. What validity have Jewish ideas on the family for us ? They are of the greatest importance, when we call to mind the fact that out of the circle of Jewish ideas sprang the teaching of the Christian church, and that it was in a Jewish family that Jesus himself grew up. By all who admit the influence of Christianity in shaping and increasing the world's civilisation, the study of the parentage of the essentially Christian ideas must be carried through as an indispensable preliminary to the understanding of their meaning.

But did not Jesus repudiate the intimate ties of household life altogether ? That has often been concluded too hastily. It is surely not without significance that all our knowledge of him till the beginning of his public ministry associates him, in the closest fashion, with his family. Indeed, if subsequent references to his mother and his brothers amount to repudiation, that very repudiation implies that the bond was previously felt to be most intimate. But do they amount to anything of the

sort ? His mother is with him beneath the cross ; almost in his last agony he, as her eldest son, provides for her future. If he turns to those who do his will to find his mother and sisters and brothers, it is because he is founding another and a spiritual family on the model of the old physical one. He bids his followers leave their old homes for his sake ; but it is because a time has come when the lessons learnt from the narrower loyalties of affection must be replaced by others, wider and more majestic. He summons James and John from their parent's side ; but he leaves both Zacchaeus and the restored Gadarene demoniac in the midst of their friends, the latter even against his wish. And though he chose, at the bidding of his own high mission, not to know the love of wife or children himself, who can fail to see, watching him as he blesses little children, or listening to him as he speaks of wedded love and fidelity, that he set the throne of the most intimate human affections higher than it had ever been lifted before ? [1]

But to say only this is to say little. If his attitude to the family as an institution is unmistakable, what of his teaching about the spirit of the family ? There, if anywhere, he is the fulfilment of the law and the prophets. In all the parables in which he refers to human intercourse, social or industrial, in all his direct teaching to his followers about their duties to other men, and lastly, in all that he says on the subject of God's high and loving demands upon men, there is an entire and extraordinary absence of the commercial, the prudential, and even the mandatory. His " kingdom is not of this world." He never suggests that goodness, as

[1] See Eucken, R., " Problem of Human Life," pp. 154, 155, 192.

he understands it, will "pay," although he knows that without it there is neither peace nor content. He never pretends that it will keep a man out of loss or danger, though there is no other means of being either safe or free. He never speaks of the laws of conduct as if they were exempt from the duty of commending themselves to man's reason or explaining themselves. Although when he announced them he used a tone of authority which the religious teachers of the day never ventured to assume, he forced them to be their own witness.

His very idea of goodness was strange to gentile systems of ethics. The word for virtue was as rare upon his lips as it was familiar to the philosophers of the grove or the porch. Law, when he used the term, simply meant what it meant to the Jews, the teaching of the five books of Moses. Even bravery, self-control, justice, seem forgotten or transcended. Goodness is simply the eager resolute affection of the son and the brother. Without this key, the simplest words of Jesus are paradoxical; with it, the hardest can be understood by a little child. For what are the outward marks of a son? To think of his father's home as the one place where he would wish to be; and of his father's wish as the one consideration to which he could give more than a moment's attention. And what are the outward marks of a brother? To feel as his own every joy or disgrace that clothes his brother's life, and to look upon the attainment of everything that can mean his brother's happiness or goodness as a sheer necessity for his own satisfaction. Under these conceptions, and under no others, can the ethical teachings of Jesus be brought. These are his rules, not for a few selected times or places, or

for rare and angelic natures in close and secluded intimacy with one another, but for the actual life of ordinary men and women in Galilean fields and towns. Impossible or fantastic as they seem, they leap into practicability when the true inward attitude is reached, and the limits of the family of which I am a member have expanded to include God in heaven and my neighbour on earth.

V. However new was this daring application of the family to intercourse with the human race, the Jews of the new "way," who first carried the Gospel into Asia and Europe, developed it unflinchingly. We might have expected them to surrender it, for three reasons. First, because of its apparent "otherworldliness"; would it not have been a better missionary policy to meet men with lower demands and easier standards of conduct? Secondly, because their first and literal attempt to translate the ideal into practice, in the primitive communism of goods in the earliest religious society had to be given up—that is, if it was ever adopted as a definite and thorough-going principle, which is by no means certain. Thirdly, because the stress they laid on the speedy return of the Lord might have led them to neglect human relationships, and to drown the sober criticism of their conduct to each other and the world outside in an ecstasy of eschatological anticipation.

That they did none of these things shows how deeply the conception of the family was rooted in their religion. The implications of that conception, the mutual responsibilities and unstinting kindnesses of kinsmen in the Gospel, were emphasised with an unwearying delicacy by one whose mind was peculiarly open to the eschatological and mysti-

cal influence of Christianity, Saul of Tarsus. He delighted to sum up the duties of parents and children, masters and slaves, in the Christian household, with a conciseness which is evidently the result of long pondering. He would picture the intercourse of the whole society in colours unseen outside the family, and hardly seen without it; "let each esteem the other better than himself"; "in honour preferring one another"; "look not every man upon his own interests, but also on the interests of others." There is no "interim morality" here.

The ideal is echoed by the other apostolic writers. But it has a deep and abiding foundation; a foundation which we might have missed if we could not look back to the Old Testament as well as to the actual reported words of Jesus. The Christian had entered the "ecclesia." This word we translate by our English "church"; but it included for those who first used it in this sense the meanings of "assembly," "society," and even "club"; an organised body whose privileges were of necessity confined to its members, but became immediately available upon entrance into membership. Yet such membership was not a mere matter of securing privileges. All the history of the old Greek world had gone to make that clear. It was also the source of duty. The member of the "ecclesia" of a state was needed by his fellow-members as much as he needed them. If he refused to engage in the life of their wider interests, he was styled an "idiotes," a word which suggested almost as much disability as its derivative "idiot," and a great deal more contempt.

To the mind of the already old civilisation of Europe into which Christianity forced its adventurous way, the city was the real unit of honour or

disgrace. To the city belonged all the glory which its children could win in war or art, in athletic contest or intellectual subtlety. For the city, every true citizen was to feel, in the great words of Pericles, the devotion of a lover to his mistress. He would rather that the city's buildings should be splendid than his own home rich. Self-sacrifice for her navy or her festivals was not self-sacrifice at all: it was self-affirmation. To be poor in a great city was better than being powerful in a small one. But his only access to the city was through membership in the ecclesia. Foreigners, slaves, and the disfranchised, had no part or lot in those splendid traditions and manifold activities. The Athenian had his "access" to the glories of Athens because he was a member of the Athenian "ecclesia," just as the Israelite had his "access" to Jehovah because he was a son of Abraham, and as the Christian had his "access" to the Father because he had become a member of the Church, the body of Christ. And that body was one great family; destined, as its members fulfilled the laws and experienced the joys of brotherhood with one another, to increase until they became a great multitude whom no man could number, out of every tribe and nation and people and tongue.

But there is more to be said. Christianity is more than a system of rules, or an attitude existing between men and men, or a new way which a man learns of looking at himself in relation to God. If we may believe its claims, it is an experience of Christ; that is to say, the Christian feels within himself the presence of a life which was once laid down for his salvation. You cannot understand Christianity without what Christianity calls the

Atonement, the Reconciliation. This has often been treated as a profound mystery; and in Paul's sense of the word, something long hidden, but now revealed to the initiates, it is so. But in no other way. On the contrary, it is the great explanation of what would otherwise be unintelligible. It is the solution of the riddle of experience.

The matter stands thus. The attitude of brotherhood, so contrary to the accepted ways of the world, was once, as every Christian man knows, contrary to the accepted ways of his own heart. He would have nothing to do with it. He might act as a brother, even with the deeper unselfishness of a brother, to a small and limited number of people who acknowledged the necessity of acting in the same way to him.[1] He could thus frame an idea of what the larger brotherhood meant—a brotherhood to those who would not be likely to respond to any advances he might make. But he had no intention of making any of those advances. And if to be prepared to make such advances was the only way of serving God, he was content to be a rebel. He was at enmity with God. But this meant farewell to any settled and lasting content or peace of mind. For though he might be able to wrest from others the services that he would never have given to them, their continuance could only be obtained at the price of struggle and uncertainty. Moreover, to be at enmity with God meant to be at enmity with oneself; to be torn in two; to know the misery of seeing the better while one is dragged into choosing the worse. It is as if one were chained to a corpse![2]

How is this state of things to come to an end? Clearly, not from the side of the rebel. And yet,

[1] Luke vi. 32. [2] Romans vii. 24.

why should it come from the side of God? What has God to gain? Far easier for Him to brush the rebel out of His path, than to attempt to reconcile such a useless creature. But when God actually advances, from His side, to a reconciliation; when His word—His whole mind, with its eternal purpose of self-manifestation and blessing for the race—becomes incarnate and, as we put it in our human language, His son is born into the world; when the life so begun means toil, suffering, dishonour, and finally death, borne with infinite patience and nobility, rebellion overleaps itself. Its strength is broken by such an appeal as this. And as he sees Christ rising again from the dead and ascending into heaven, the rebel once tied to a corpse now knows that he is free. He discovers in a flash of wondering recognition that all this suffering and obedience was for him. He has passed from what was nothing less than death into life, a willing captive in the triumphal procession of the conqueror.

But the resolve to make such an appeal as this can only spring from the very centre of what we have called the spirit of the family,

> "Love to the loveless shown,
> That they might lovely be."

There is no purer example of what the passion in the heart of a father or a brother can achieve. And since the very life which has rescued him from death is manifested in such love as this, the Christian finds that his own new-born life has no other principle. His existence is rooted in a redemptive love which, with the jealous eagerness of God Himself, yearns to spend itself in increasing God's family by treat-

ing as brothers all those to whom the very word is a laughing-stock.[1]

One can hardly pretend that the foregoing account, which is roughly the experience implied by the letters of Paul, has been explicit in the life of the average Christian in all ages. But it can be proved that the influence of Christianity has varied directly with the extent to which this experience has been felt. The religion of Christ has been served by many agents in the long course of its history; by the quiet humanity which purified home life in the last centuries of the Roman world; by the pioneering courage which took the Gospel into the unknown wilds where the Northern barbarians were threatening to overwhelm all order in one vast chaos of cruelty and greed; by the new-born impulse to comradeship and the communal life which built the monastic cells and halls at Fountains or at Bec, and so preserved religion, learning and the arts of industry alike. It has spread abroad through the martyr zeal which would cheerfully face the stake for a theological formula; through the missionary's journey into newly-found continents to preach the love of God to naked savages; and through all that longing for the spread of cleanliness, health of body and mind and soul, and the chance to taste the higher joys of life, to which we to-day give the name of social reform. But the heart of all these has been the impulse which is born of the Christian conception of the family of God, and the necessity laid upon men to preach the good news of that family to them that are without.

VI. But can we find this principle universally

[1] The author may be allowed at this point to refer to the argument elaborated in his "Ethics and Atonement," chaps. v., vii.

carried out in the actual history of the Church? Three great exceptions confront us; early monasticism, priestly celibacy, and the Reformation. In the third and succeeding centuries, the Church drove thousands of its most eager followers, men and women, into the desert. They did not only abjure their old family ties and secular occupations like the members of the great monastic communities of the Middle Ages; they lived alone, each in his cave or on his all but inaccessible rock; and weaker brethren, who were still immersed in the world, found their ideals of sanctity in a St Antony or a St Simeon of the Pillar. But the age of early monasticism was an age of weakness, not of strength. The contempt for the simpler duties of social and family life, the separation of a crowd of enthusiastic souls from the ordinary loyalties of human society introduced into the history of the times a turbulence, a fever, and an immorality which Gibbon was quick to turn into a charge against Christianity as such. Even so, the monks of the Thebaid would have been comparatively harmless, if they had not been forced, by the laws of human nature, to deny their own ideals, and to construct a community of their own, in whose life and activities the ignorant intolerance of individuals was magnified into a danger to the whole fabric of religion. No wonder that when the sword of Islam was drawn, Christianity in Egypt and Northern Africa, the home of the religion of the hermitage and the cave, fell almost without a struggle.

The principle of sacerdotal celibacy, on the contrary, has endured for centuries. Elaborated, not in the tumultuous theological assemblies of the East, but in the calm and statesmanlike councils of

the West, was it not the great preservative of the very structure of the Church throughout the Dark Ages? And is it not therefore the symbol of a great cleavage between the Church and the family —a reminder that in the eyes of the Church the secular life is after all only a "second best"? Even the Protestant, who refuses absolutely to admit this suggestion, will recognise the immense service to the stability of the Church which was rendered by the rule of celibacy, and the profound wisdom of Hildebrand and Innocent in insisting on it. But, on the other side, the Catholic cannot deny, first, that the rule has been disgraced, since its establishment, by immorality, sometimes secret, sometimes even unblushing, among all ranks of the clergy; and that its value has consisted in the strengthening of new loyalties and not in the abjuration of old ones. To turn the priesthood into a military organisation, controlled by an iron discipline and inspired by an unswerving devotion to a single aim, was a unique achievement; yet it entailed an inevitable nemesis. Casting a perpetual aspersion on the life of husband and wife, parent and child, it drove the laity into the outer courts of the service of God; it replaced the love of Christ by the interests of the Church; and it prepared the way for that deep-rooted suspicion of the Church, as an alien and hostile institution, which is the problem of the Catholic world to-day.[1]

A difficulty of a very different kind is presented by the Reformation. The Reformation was the result of a definite outbreak of individualism. The

[1] It must be remembered to the credit of mediæval Catholicism, that she uniformly asserted the necessity for the consent of both parties to a marriage and the indissolubility of the marriage bond.

desire to save one's own soul, the defiance of the earlier idea of a society whose ideals are to be spread by its members, and the conviction of the stupendous worth of the solitary and individual life and of the separate responsibility of every man and woman before God, were the great spiritual levers that moved the whole of Northern Europe to the side of Luther and Melanchthon.[1] The same impulse, too, was at the foundation of the revival of religion in the eighteenth century.

Protestantism, it would seem, was really a protest against the family conception of religion. But this charge needs careful consideration. To state it in this form is not to state the whole truth. There is enough truth in it, indeed, to account for the great and disastrous mistake made by Luther and his German followers, as distinct from the Calvinists of Geneva. The first preaching of the Reformation was welcomed by the German people as a social as well as a distinctly religious message. If every human life was of such inestimable worth in the eyes of God, then the peasant was surely meant to be a free man in Christ, and the state of practical serfdom in which he was kept by the nobility was an outrage on the will of God. These novel claims offered an invaluable opportunity to the young Lutheran Church. The theologians and preachers might have seized upon the real justice that was involved in them, and connected them with the great idea of a redeemed and free and contented society built up on personal devotion to the Saviour of all mankind, with whom is no respect of persons,

[1] This was the basis of the Reformers' tendency to treat marriage as a civil contract, which, under certain circumstances, might be justifiably terminated by a divorce.

either rich or poor. This idea had already formed itself in the mind of Calvin, and was taking concrete shape in the Genevan commonwealth. But, with the Lutherans, the doctrine of individual salvation left no room for social redemption. They were puzzled and frightened by this unexpected application of their teaching. The peasants, rebuffed where they had looked for guidance, felt themselves betrayed, and broke out into violence. The nobles at once replied with savage measures of repression ; and the leaders of the Church threw all their influence on the side of wealth and power. The peasants' revolt, attacked by both the temporal and the spiritual swords, was ruthlessly cut down. But the peasants never forgot the sharp lesson they had received ; and the Lutheran Church has remained the Church of the rich and the bourgeois, not of the proletariate.

On the other hand, it would not be fair to say that the Lutherans lost the conception of the Church as a great religious society—the family of which God was the Father in Heaven. It had been lost before. In the Middle Ages, Rome had allowed the thought of the " Body of Christ," as a great household, to perish. The Church was indeed a society ; but it was a household of faith no longer. It existed simply as a company, so to speak, of road-makers, whose business was to keep open the highway whereby each member hoped to be able to find his separate path to heaven. Of all kinds of selfishness, corporate selfishness of this sort is the most deadly. No one can be surprised that a Church so false to its own mission was fated to see the nameless degradations of the Court of Avignon. But behind this lay the fact that the Church had forgotten God.

The common man had nothing to do with God. His duty was simply to be a good son of the Church —a matter which was possible without giving God a single thought.

Then came the Reformation, with its doctrine of individual salvation and justification by faith. It re-discovered the forgotten truth that no family is possible without a father. A mechanical corporation is the negation of a family. True, the special emphasis thus given to individualism tended to blind part of the Protestant world to the complementary truth. Yet it was never wholly neglected. At the end of the eighteenth century, in England, it became prominent once more, though even then hardly conscious of itself. After the preaching of the Methodist evangelists had roused the English nation to the conviction that mere conformity to an Established Church could bring neither forgiveness nor peace, and had turned men's minds once more to an individual dealing with God and the consciousness of a personal salvation, there sprang up, as if automatically, a desire to "commend the Saviour" to others, a desire characteristically expressed by Charles Wesley as early as 1749.

"Then let us attend
Our heavenly Friend,
In His members distressed,
By want or affliction or sickness oppressed;
The prisoner relieve,
The stranger receive,
Supply all their wants,
And spend and be spent in assisting His saints."

To many minds, this philanthropic enthusiasm has been the main justification of the whole movement. Nor can its importance be over-estimated.

Every great advance which has helped to change the face of England in the nineteenth century can be directly or indirectly traced back to it. The leading reformers in the social and political worlds, almost without exception, were influenced by it or by the movements to which it gave birth. But the philanthropic enthusiasm was itself an effect. It arose precisely as it arose in the first century of the Christian era. No man can understand the meaning of the words " Christ is my Saviour," without seeing that Christ is the Saviour of all, and that he himself is a debtor to all. But this debt can only be paid when he fulfils, so far as his powers and opportunities allow, the will of Christ for all.

What is that will ? It can only be learnt from the words and actions of Christ himself as he lived on earth. The servant of Christ will remember that his master was equally ready to say, " Thy sins be forgiven Thee," and " Take up thy bed and walk." He will therefore be equally eager, for his part, to lead men to repent of their sins, and to relieve them in their sufferings. In fact, if he prays to be delivered from his own troubles, he cannot but set himself to deliver others from theirs. When he does this, he is often surprised to find how much the accomplishment of the second task aids the performance of the first. But unless the two are carried on together, neither can ever be fulfilled. The service of man has never been consistently carried out unless it has drawn its inspiration from the grace of God, formulated its rules on the precepts of the Bible, and recruited its supporters from the professed believers in religion. But every attempt to dissociate " spiritual religion " from practical philanthropy, or to regard the active de-

termination to alleviate the conditions of life as something which the genuine follower of Christ can take or leave as he prefers, must be looked on with the gravest suspicion.

VII. There remains an objection of a very different nature. Can Christianity, can religion in any form, be typified by the domestic virtues of the family? Is it not altogether too grand and soaring? Religion has kindled the deepest loves, the fiercest hates which history has described or the human race has known; she has been the mother of tragedy and heroism, of endurance and of rebellion. But there is little of these vast emotions in the word "domestic." It suggests the chaste and sober experiences of

> "The parson and the parson's wife,
> And mostly married people."

Surely, it may be urged, religion in her strength towers far above the

> "transient sorrows, simple wiles,
> Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears and smiles"

which dwell around the family hearth.

To argue thus is after all to take a very superficial view. It is true that a very great deal of family life exhibits nothing more exciting than transient tears and smiles. It is necessary to remember, as Goethe once said, that the main interest of most people is to feed themselves and to bring up their children. It is equally true that most campaigns are matters chiefly of marching and countermarching and keeping the roads open for supplies, with a battle occurring as a welcome diversion only now and then. But this does not prevent the soldier from obeying the law of reason or cherishing

the sacred fire of pure and chivalrous discipline every day; it is the law made in calmness and tested

> "in the common strife
> Or mild concerns of ordinary life"

which inspires the happy warrior in the tremendous moments of supreme danger and glory. More than this, the real tests of his life occur, not in the heat of conflict, when the mere enthusiasm of numbers will reveal or even create daring and heroism; but in solitary watches and rain-soaked bivouacs, or in the cheerfulness which changes a toilsome march into an alluring adventure. No man can fight a battle who cannot light a camp fire in the wet with a jest.

In exactly the same way the apparent dullness of family life is the soil from which springs its real life and genuine greatness. What could have been more unromantic than the children's life at the mill on the Floss? Yet what scene in any modern novel contains more elements of the sublime—not less sublime because infinitely touching—than the description of the tiny stream, swollen into sudden and irresistible flood, bearing away Tom and Maggie, after all their heartburnings, misunderstandings, and tears, locked in one last embrace, as when "hand in hand they roamed the daisied fields together"? The deepest emotions, the strongest passions, spring from the first relationships which we are any of us conscious of forming.

Nowhere else do we find such stimulus for the feelings which tell us that we are greater than we know. This is the reason why the love of God, which can never be expressed save by metaphors, naturally clothes itself in the language of conjugal and parental affection. And this is why the history

of the purest and most powerful religious emotions can always be traced back to the lessons learnt in family life. Destroy these simple opportunities for self-denial, the sharing of anxiety and joy, the pride in another's success, the shame in another's failure and guilt, and you will make it impossible for most men and women to understand the full rapture of that service of God which is perfect freedom. On the other hand, the habit of quick response to the command of an affectionate voice best prepares the way for obedience to some high duty. The ready helpfulness which, in childhood, puts down a book or leaves a game to "help mother," and the sympathy which can make a meal-time bright or a domestic trouble bearable, find their fruit in adventurous devotion to the cause of lepers or prisoners, sweated children or negro slaves. In such self-dedication, "pure religion breathing household laws" reaches its true embodiment. The triumphs of the saint are won in the simple piety of family intercourse.

To-day the Church is faced by a more subtle danger than that from which it was delivered in part by the Reformation. If she is still to exert her traditional influence over Europe and the world in the future, it will have to be by remaining true to the principle of the family. But of this family, God is the head. All her difficulties, on the Continent and in this country—difficulties which are by no means over, and may perhaps be only at their beginning—have arisen from her forgetfulness of this, and her claim to be a privileged society, whose dogmas must remain unchallenged, whose services must be attended as a duty, and whose commands must be obeyed without question.

It is probable that there will have to be considerable changes in the conduct of the mass of Christian people before the Church can regain the influence she ought to enjoy. Contempt for wealth, uneasiness at popularity, readiness to take the least conspicuous place, freedom from anxiety and spite, and contagious joy in something that no variations of fortune can affect—these are far more efficacious evangelists than her preaching of sermons and her repetition of doctrinal formulae.

The actual increase in material comfort (which is, however, by no means uniform) cannot absolve her from her real task ; and the spread of education only renders it more imperative. Her duty will not be at an end, indeed, either when she has secured the abolition of destitution, or when human reason has definitely accepted all her doctrines. Both these objects she must pursue. She will not pursue them less eagerly because they are means and not ends. But if even the means are to be secured, she must keep her eye fixed on the end. The end, for all who accept the New Testament as authoritative, can only be the establishment of a society in which the spirit of Christ shall be the regulating principle of human conduct ; that is, where every individual recognises the spirit of Christ as at once the guide assigned for his own actions and dealings with others, and the inward inspiration and energy amply sufficient for their due performance ; and where universal zeal for the good estate of each provokes to good works, and will rise at last into obedience to

> " the ultimate, angels' law
> Indulging every instinct of the soul,
> There where law, life, joy, impulse are one thing."

CHAPTER XI

SOME CONCRETE PROBLEMS

I. After the foregoing investigation, we may dismiss from our minds either the fear or the hope that the family will disappear. Rome was not built in a day, and it did not decay in a year. The family was not built at all; it was no one's invention; it was no one's discovery. Like the human body, it grew. Would we know which preceded the other, the family or the individual? We might as well ask which came first, the mother or the child. In nature, there are no antecedents and no consequents. The wheat was there before the seed fell into the ground and died. The bird was there, though in the germ, before the egg was laid. Nature knows but life and its varying manifestations. Inseparable from human life is the human family. If you could destroy the second, you would transform the first.

The immense capacity for variation exhibited by the family is a proof of this. To many timorous persons, the family means some particular type of family, which acquaintance and custom have consecrated in their eyes. Change this type, they cry with a shudder, and society and morality are doomed. But history knows nothing of this sanctity. In the adaptability of the family institution lies its strength. Undowered with power to fit itself to the most diverse conditions, from Arctic cold to equatorial heat, the human race would long ago

have dwindled off the face of the earth ; or else the members of the race would have grown as different from one another as boar-hounds from spaniels or cats from tigers. On our variability are built our persistence and our similarity.

It is so with the family. In the long and chequered course of its history, it has faced dangers greater than any which threaten it in Europe to-day. The migrations and upheavals of pre-historic ages, the ravages of sword and pestilence, famine and flood, the forcible uprooting of whole populations on which for a few generations rested Assyrian stability, the high-handed subjugation of a more developed civilisation by a lower, from which, for example, sprang the Greek and the mediæval culture, the chaos of the European dark ages, the devastations of the Huns and the Tartars, equally with the disintegrating impact of modern Europe on primitive races, and the exploitation of entire tribes and peoples by Arab slave hunters or Belgian rubber agents—if any secular or human agencies could have shaken the family, these would have proved its ruin. But it has recovered from every shock. The blows of fate often seem hardly to have been felt.

The truth is that both the family spirit and the family institution are essential to the *esse* as well as to the *bene esse* of humanity. To the first, because from infancy to old age man is far too weak to wrest food and security by himself from his surroundings. Whether wandering in the jungle, encamped in the desert, or crowded in the modern city, he must be armed with the weapons of faith and comradeship, however primitive their form and uncertain their temper ; and these weapons can neither be forged nor preserved nor wielded unless the instincts which

call for them are built into the fabric of some concrete social edifice. To the second, because without such faith and comradeship none of the graces of life can flourish. The sword and spear which save man's life from his mortal foes are also the ploughshares and pruning hooks which make a fruitful field out of his forest and turn his wilderness into a garden. Rob him of these, and what chance has he of morals or religion, of social progress or of any enjoyment except the senseless pleasure of the animal ?

Curiously enough, what has been true of human life through every age seems to be revealed with regard to individuals by some of our latest sociological investigations. As is well known, the rate of suicide has been steadily growing in the last century. " The miseries of our modern industrial life are becoming insupportable," we say. But nothing could be farther from the truth. Suicide is far more prominent in Protestant and advancing than in Catholic and relatively backward countries. Its victims are more numerous among unmarried persons in tolerable circumstances than among the hard-pressed and over-burdened fathers and mothers of poverty. It is those who have never known the real bitterness of the struggle for life who give it up in despair. Nor is the reason for this apparent paradox hard to discover. Struggle and poverty cannot of themselves conquer the will to live. They may only make it more resolute or more stolid. Life ceases to seem worth living just when a man has only himself to live for. The very sluggishness and immobility of communities in Catholic countries mean that personal relations have far more stability there ; and the overworked and sweated widow, with five little children tugging at her ragged skirts, will struggle

on, when the childless unmarried man, out of sheer lack of duties, puts an end to his comfortable life.[1] For the purposes alike of life and of good and worthy life, duties are not burdens; they are necessary conditions. And the nurse of all duties is the family.

This permanence in human life both of the family itself as an institution and of what may be called the spirit of the family—the consciousness of a common good, to be reached by some amount of self-suppression and comradeship—may be illustrated by the permanence of physical health in the race. Endless as have been the changes, natural and artificial, which have rolled over humanity from age to age, health has remained its normal characteristic. Hunger and plenty, nakedness and clothing, solitude and crowds, life beneath the open sky and between thick walls, have all been consistent with health. But for this, the race would long since have suffered the fate of the mammoth and the dinosaur. Yet health is no inalienable endowment. It is bestowed, like the Hebrews' Promised Land, to be maintained at the point of the sword. Under certain conditions, a high level of general health is impossible. Nature is never responsible for these conditions. They are born of human ignorance, carelessness, and greed. But they can be mastered. The Canaanite dwelling in the land cannot defy a determined attempt to expel him. Nature is on

[1] See Chatterton-Hill, W. L., "Heredity and Selection in Sociology." The latest figures for the U.S.A., as given by Mr F. L. Hoffman, show that out of 150 large cities, 59 showed an increase in the rate of suicide, 39 a decrease, and 2 no change. Mr Hoffman attributes self-murder to a deliberate conviction that continued existence is not worth while because of disappointment in the realisation of material aims or the certainty of the serious consequences of wrongful acts. He does not mention severe poverty as a cause.

our side. But to enjoy her gifts we must obey her laws and fight her battles.

This is equally true of the family. Leave Nature to herself, and the family, in some shape or form, will always persist. Unfortunately, we cannot leave Nature to herself. The social relations which would be impossible without the family are constantly and increasingly interfering with the position which the family occupies in society. The more highly organised society becomes, the more numerous are the influences which act, for better or for worse, upon the institution on which all such organisation is built. If all the skill and science of the time is needed to preserve the physical health which Nature has so liberally bestowed even on carelessness and ingratitude, the future of the family must be studied with equal care, and provided for with equal wisdom and zeal.

II. Yet it cannot be denied that the characteristic influences of to-day appear to be pointing to change, and to disintegrating change, in the family, whether we think of the family as a social institution, or as the creator of a moral attitude. In fact, the family is being wounded in the house of its friends. The very departments of our social life where the family was strongest now seem to be defying its claims. At the very beginning of our study [1] we noticed some of the well-known enemies of family life; the interference of modern conditions of labour with the working-class home; and the possibilities of injustice and misery allowed by the marriage law in its present condition. There is no need to repeat what was then said; but there is a good deal to be said for the case against the family which we there left un-

[1] See pp. 14 ff.

noticed ; and we must now glance at the chief heads of the argument. We shall find that the very influences which ought to strengthen the family are in some cases at work sapping its foundations.

Let us consider, in the first place, the influence of religion. Hitherto, as we have seen, religion and the family have travelled hand in hand. Religion has sanctified the family relationships, and has found its central stronghold in family ceremonials. The individual has been discovered, only to be placed in a society of which the family has always been the type. But in the modern evangelical churches the worth of the individual is gaining quite a new kind of recognition, and the appeal to the individual and the choice of the individual is looked on with a new and deeper respect. The ancient prophesy that daughter would be set against mother and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law is finding a disconcertingly literal fulfilment, not only on the foreign mission field, but in almost every district at home where there is an " aggressive " church or chapel. Further, the old decorous institution of the " family pew," we are told, is each year becoming more antiquated. The varied activities of our modern religious societies leave no time for the leisurely joys of home ; each sex and age has its appropriate gathering and organisation ; and the religious disintegration of the more fortunate classes proceeds by differences of taste, education, friendship and interest, as that of the poor is hurried on by the possibilities of excitement or charity in church and chapel alike.

Consider, in the next place, the changes that are passing over our social life. Here, as in the case of religion, the ties of home and family are weaker, those of age and occupation are ever increasing in

strength and number. True, this is not a purely modern complaint. Euripides, as we saw, noted it as one of the evils of Athenian society four centuries before Christ. But Athenian society, even in the days of Pericles, contained within itself the seeds of corruption, while, on the other hand, there were in Athens, as in the countries which still seclude and mentally starve their women, certain close ties between kinsmen unknown in Western Europe. The housing conditions of the slums almost force the members of a family from the home and from one another. The more respectable a family, and the worthier its ideals, the more will its members wish to escape from the over-crowded rooms where boys and girls must herd together, with perhaps a lodger or two to complicate the problem, and, it may be, the parents themselves unable to sleep apart from the rest. At the other end of the scale, the social habits of the rich turn their houses into great hotels and caravanseries, or else shut them up while their owners pursue a nomad existence in other caravanseries at home or abroad.

This is an entirely modern danger. In the Middle Ages, men and women fled from their homes to the cloister in thousands ; but they only exchanged one family for another. The records of monastic life show how close were the relations of its followers with the world on which they professed to have turned their backs, and even with their own kith and kin. If the rule of father and mother was abjured, the rule of abbot or prior was cheerfully obeyed ; and the monk generally found that with the other members of his order and his " house " he could enjoy social intercourse quite as pleasant as with the actual relations who were left behind to

labour under the shadow of the hated manor house or castle. But where the sociable and friendly monk or nun swarmed, the solitary hermit was always rare and nearly always suspected. Moreover, the monk lived by a rule far more definite than that of most families. To-day, resentment against rule and restraint is steadily growing. Opportunities for "realising oneself" multiply on every hand. The modern development of travel, both by cycle and train, and the various avenues of amusement and culture in the theatre, the concert, the lecture, and elsewhere, are helping young and old to turn their eyes in different directions. The growth of club life in all sections of society is a further rival to the home; and the increasing facilities for living in hotels, as expensive as the Cecil or as cheap as the Rowton House, while they do not perhaps make it any easier than it actually was in former centuries to leave the family, make it far easier to remain without any family or society at all. Then, if old ties were broken, new ones had to be formed. Now, it is not necessary to form any ties whatsoever.

Modern industry is moving in exactly the same direction. Its watchword is mobility. Ever since the industrial revolution of the eighteenth century, it has been necessary for labour to appear where capital demands its presence. In the old placid days, sons might be apprenticed to their fathers, and "Amurath to Amurath succeed," in the stable industries of the village or the market town. Now, the lad, on leaving school, if his parents have wisely enabled him to learn a trade, may have to travel to some distant town, after a time, to pursue it. The woman, though she may manage heroically to combine the callings of labourer, wife, and mother in

her own person, can only purchase efficiency in the first by some often deplorable inefficiency in the other two. Coming attacks on unemployment will certainly mean that the mobility of labour will have to be increased; and the growing recognition for the need of women's hostels reminds us how dangerously the isolated woman is increasing by the side of the isolated man.

The social movement presents us with similar possibilities. If the inevitable self-centredness of competitive industry separates husband and wife, parent and child, among the crowded ranks of its "hands," the generous enthusiasm of social experts is also joining in the alliance. If he is content with the ideals of the existing Poor Law, the reformer will cheerfully destroy the family to place fathers, mothers and children in the separate departments intended for their efficient treatment, to say nothing of further establishments for the sick, the aged, and the feeble-minded. If he prefers to break up the familiar machinery for dealing with destitution, he finds himself compelled to grapple with the problem of individual helplessness, whether in regard to education, medical attendance, after-care, or industrial idleness or inefficiency, right athwart the natural ties of kindred and home, and to carry these methods far outside the confines of pauperism into the wider realms of actual or even possible poverty or need. Even these somewhat drastic measures are not universally recognised as going far enough. Why should we waste our energies and perplex our brains in assisting the helpless and curing the diseased? Some would urge us to prevent these poor creatures from finding their way into the world, even at the cost of denying parental and family life to certain

members of the community altogether. The narrower considerations of the family must be subordinate to the more majestic requirements of the health and well-being of the State. Where the two collide, the family must be effaced.

This is not all. By the side of these concrete dangers which threaten the institution of the family in all grades of society are others, less accessible, but perhaps, because more subtle, more powerful also. Our modern philosophy is growing steadily more social; all the departments of our thought are opening their doors to the entrance of sociology, with its two great categories of the individual and society; and theology itself has shown as much hospitality to the new-comer as psychology. This open-mindedness is by no means necessarily to be deplored. But it certainly carries with it the possibility that the special claims of the family will be ignored and driven off the field. It may even be that what we have called the spirit of the family, the readiness to subordinate individual aims to the common good, to reconcile egoism and altruism in a satisfaction which is "mine" because it is "yours," may develop into hostility or neglect towards the family as an actual social institution.

This enthusiasm for the service of humanity recalls the austerities demanded by religion. The social servant, in his high-minded resolve not to turn back from the plough to which he has put his hand, may forget to say farewell to his mother and his home. It is a tragedy when one gives up for party what was meant for mankind. Is it not equally tragic when one gives up for the crowded purlieus of Shoreditch or Ancoats what was born for the little home in the suburbs? It is true that high authority can be urged

for such a step as this ; [1] but we have yet to prove that the well-known command of Jesus to leave house and kindred for his sake and the gospel's was meant to be obeyed by all his followers indiscriminately.

It is also true that the affection and common life of a family are constantly interfered with at the bidding of commerce or self-interest. When a youth contemplates joining the work of a Chinese or Indian mission field, his friends will exclaim against his cold and unnatural conduct in leaving his parents and his home ; if a commercial position of some promise in Hongkong or Singapore is offered to his brother, everyone will applaud the young man in hastening to qualify for it. The claims of philanthropic or religious service rarely present themselves with the imperiousness characteristic of business considerations. This, however, does not really diminish the danger. In the case of a business claim, the family as a whole will reap the advantage ; or else the interests of one individual are balanced against the ties of duty. When this takes place, the moral verdict at least will be clear. But when social or philanthropic work is concerned, we are often perplexed by a conflict of duties ; and the very fact that the claims of the family are confronted by devotion to a lofty ideal makes their maintenance the more difficult.

Again, the kindly sympathies of modern ethical writings are hurrying in the same direction. There was an iron time when to talk of rights meant to think of the rights of property and wealth ; when the duties which came first to our mind were the duties of the poor and humble to their betters. A

[1] Matt. x. 37 ; Mark x. 29 ; Luke ix. 61 f. ; Luke xiv. 26.

salutary change is coming about. "*Noblesse oblige*," and even the rough-and-tumble game of politics is teaching us that social privilege means national responsibility, and that those who are strong owe it as a duty to help the weak. Benevolence and sympathy are never likely, in this world, to be imperilled by too much adulation or influence; but it is unsafe to regard any class in the community as being destined to be, on the whole, either givers or receivers. It is dangerous to allow a divorce between rights and duties even when the hand that parts them is the hand of an angel. Only an ignorant benevolence forgets that the one true gift is the gift either of a duty to be discharged or the power to discharge it or else a combination of the two. For most people, this duty is primarily the duty entailed by family life. The milk-and-water of human kindness, deprived of this necessary ingredient, is a diet at once thin and indigestible.

III. Next, the short-sightedness of what is best in our society is carried further by the deliberate march of what is worst. Family life is a necessity for the normal human being—a necessity at once physical and spiritual. Its spirituality lifts the physical above the merely animal; indeed, the man who neglects the spiritual aspect sinks beneath the brute. Its physical element provides the stimulus which the spiritual by itself would often fail to arouse, and brings the spiritual to those who otherwise would go through life without it. But the spiritual element, the patience, self-control, joy in the smiles of others, readiness to share and conquer their pain—all this may totally fail to attract; it may actually repel; while the discipline and restraint demanded by the family in every form which it has ever assumed may

be defied. Such defiance is always easier in advanced than in primitive civilisations, and the opportunities for gratification through its defiance, few and insignificant to the Australian or the Veddah, are to be found everywhere in the swarming towns of modern Europe and the East.[1]

The veil which a decent reticence has flung over the facts of prostitution in the modern world has added greatly to the comfort of those who live on the respectable side of it, as well as to the security of those who, whenever the desire takes them, can pass beyond it. To tear it roughly aside naturally calls forth protests from the best as well as the worst elements in our society. But it is a veil through which those who are still untainted can pass to the other side with fatal ease. Many of our social conditions combine to make that passage the easier, just as the moral sentiments of the reputable combine to make a return almost impossible. It is so convenient that stones should be cast at a woman taken in sin that we do not stop to ask whether the hands that cast them are clean, whether we ourselves have allowed the woman to live under conditions in which we might have felt ourselves all but pushed into wrong-doing, or whether a greater judge, turning with hardly concealed contempt from us, might not have said to her, "neither do I condemn thee."[2] And

[1] The connexion between sexual impurity and social conditions has already been briefly pointed out (p. 270).

[2] The tragedies which underlie what most of us so easily condemn and forget may be illustrated by a single incident. A woman had just been convicted, after a score of appearances in court, for solicitation. "Why do you not give it up?" asked a lady who was present. "I'm fair riddled with it," was the reply. "But surely that is the more reason why you should bring it to an end." "Who'ld have me?" The woman had been betrayed, by an acquaintance, when she was an innocent girl of nineteen. Compare Brieux' powerful play, "Damaged Goods."

then, if men must sin, there are always so many more women to take the place of the poor creature whom we have just stoned! So the veil remains, and every effort to remove it is vigorously and even desperately resisted.

But though, to many eyes, it is opaque enough, it is not and cannot be a disinfecting curtain. The prisoners of the underworld may never pass through it to the light; but the contagion of that world laughs at the ineffective barrier. We do not destroy what we refuse to see. We cannot annihilate the army of seduced and fallen women in every large town by agreeing not to talk about it. We cannot destroy the impure desires of which that sad population is the prey by behaving as if they did not exist. We cannot protect ourselves from the actual physical dangers which arise from the toleration of this institution, and lie in wait even for the most innocent members of the community, by avoiding the mention of their very name. Sexual vice is the greatest foe which the family ever has to face; it allures, entangles and dooms to horrible physical and mental sufferings those who were meant for all the joys of happy parents and children. It is equally true that those who suffer most from the practice are often the sinned against rather than the sinning; and that besides cutting off some of its victims from family life altogether, it turns others loose to sink the happiness of the families which they form into the most hopeless misery and ruin.

The economic side of this baffling question has been already discussed.[1] But there are not wanting those who hint that the existence of this underworld is the price that society must pay for its pure and virginal

[1] See page 271.

homes. " Aufer meretrices," said St Augustine, " de rebus humanis, turbaveris omnia libidinibus " ; the cost of the flower is the existence of noxious weeds which poison the air, corrupt the soil, and end by choking the flower itself. If such were the fact, we should have to accept it, and consider whether the cultivation of flowers were really worth while. A sounder psychology, however, will happily correct pessimism like this ; and, indeed, such pessimism, in the mouth of a man who professes religious convictions, comes terribly near to blasphemy. The existence of wandering desires, both in men and women—desires which may blaze up, apparently for no special reason, into violent and lawless passions, —everyone must sorrowfully admit. It is equally clear that their indulgence entails the worst results, physical, social and moral. To argue that in certain cases these results do not follow, and that if limited to very rare satisfaction such desires may be harmless, is on the same logical level as arguing that the act of murder may in some cases rid society of a villain and cause no harm to the murderer, and that murder for that reason is not to be regarded as in itself a crime.

To regard the act as more serious when it involves infidelity to the marriage bond is natural ; but in most cases this attitude is the result of the false view of marriage which assumes the husband's proprietary right over the wife, and it neglects the obvious possibility that the unmarried man is a potential husband, and the certainty that the act is a matter which does not simply concern two people, but the whole of society. For the Christian, St Paul's indignant words about taking the limbs of Christ and making them the limbs of a harlot ought

to cover the whole thing with loathsomeness and horror.

Now, such desires as these can rarely be met successfully with a blank "thou shalt not." Mere prohibition simply strengthens them by keeping the attention fixed upon them. In this way, the law may actually become a minister of sin. On the other hand, the strength of every desire may be weakened by example, by neutralising dangerous suggestions, by associating the idea of the desired object with something dreaded or unpleasant, by duty, by turning the interest elsewhere, or by a strong affection. But, it may be said, many a man gives way to the most dangerous desires in spite of all these safeguards. This may be so. No human safeguard is an infallible protection in the world of morals. But, in the majority of such cases, it will be found that the strength of these safeguards has been unequally matched with inducements to indulgence. On the other hand, the influence of home should be far stronger than that of some chance or dissolute acquaintance outside; the interests which centre round home-life, more particularly if that home-life is in any real sense religious, will rob the theatrical poster, the indecent photograph or the paragraph in the newspaper of its suggestiveness, coarse or subtle. The teaching which a father or mother ought to be able to give better than any one else will supply the element of deterrence which Nature has so remarkably provided, and which the strongest souls can rarely afford entirely to neglect.

The family is the greatest sufferer through this evil; it is also our chief hope for lessening its disastrous effects. The consciousness of family, as an intimate bond which makes the slightest act of each member a

matter of infinite concern to all the rest, when it has once come to exist, will withstand the shocks of the wildest impulses. The family does not owe any obligation to the social possibilities of impurity. On the contrary, these opportunities have always been the most determined enemies of domestic stability. But if such opportunities are to be destroyed, or rendered harmless, it can only be through a strong family life. This is not to assert that no one who has not a home of his own can be expected to withstand temptation of this kind. But it is to assert that this shameful blot on our civilisation and its professed religion is not a disgrace which we are bound to suffer. It can be wiped away, and the materials for this achievement are to our hands. We need not be overcome by impurity ; though that is a fate which has before now overtaken entire communities, and it is not wholly out of the range of possibility for modern nations. We can overcome impurity by means of the great institution founded on that sensitive, reverent and self-restraining love which is the very bond of purity.

IV. We have now reviewed some of the main influences which appear to be undermining the position of the family, even among its declared champions. What then is to be the future of the family ? Can it be that the venerable institution has weathered so many storms, only to make shipwreck at the moment when its significance is being learnt anew and the eagerness for its gifts is reawakening ? In the preceding paragraphs we have said nothing about the direct attacks upon the family to which reference has already been made ; we have spoken simply of the influences which have resulted from the natural working of social forces

to-day. How are their operations to be avoided or neutralised ?

If we are content to leave them alone, it may be that the acquisitions of our own time will turn into scourges unknown in any previous age. It was said of the French Revolution that, like Saturn, it devoured its own children. It is possible that modern civilisation may be generating forces which are destined to turn against itself. A period of achievement always bids the wise beware of stagnation. The sudden inrush of wealth dwells hard by the door of bankruptcy. The eager young embodiment of Physical Energy, reining in his steed of fresh and confident desire to conquer the glory of the world, may grow into the bloated and monstrous figure of Mammon, with his heavy hand laid upon the head of innocence, and youth flung dead at his feet. We may refuse our co-operation to Nature ; even then, she will not take back her gift ; but she may stand by while we break it in our carelessness or sloth.

It is something to have learnt what we want to do, and what will be ineffectual in achieving our aim. If our analysis of the present position of the family is correct, the main dangers that threaten it may be classed under two heads ; the desire for social welfare, and the desire for individual freedom. The first issues in an isolation of the individual from his nearest ties in order that he may gain certain elements of well-being whose absence will, in the long run, leave society the poorer. The second demands a similar range of unrestricted choice, irrespective of any social considerations, in the name of private wealth or gratification. The second appears in the light of what is purely selfish ; though there are still those who tell us that private selfishness will breed public prosperity.

The first, while it proclaims its allegiance to the good of the whole, and its power of reconciling the good of the whole with the good of each, neglects, equally with the second, those closer and more intimate ties which, as our investigation has revealed, have been the seeds of virtue and of civic life in every age, and even the champions of all personal freedom which is worth the name.

V. This second desire, however, for individual freedom, needs a little further consideration. What of the clash between freedom and the restrictions of marriage and the marriage laws? George Meredith —forgetting, perhaps, that the British public, save from its accepted jesters, takes everything *au grand serieux*—once suggested that all marriages should automatically come to an end in ten years. But though he was hardly serious, he probably knew that some people would find his suggestion an expression of very serious wishes of their own, while others—a far larger number—have long desired, and not a few have practised, a considerably greater degree of freedom than is contemplated by the supporters of the present English marriage laws. It needed no Royal Commission on Divorce to make that perfectly clear. Ought divorce to be made an easier matter than it is—that is to say, than it is for persons in England who possess neither easy morals nor an easy income? And, if so, how much easier?

This question, of vital importance for the future of the family, can hardly be regarded as outside the range of discussion, save by one class of people. Those who believe that the two statements of our Lord, as reported in Matthew v. 32 and Mark x. 11, are at once consistent with each other, and intended to be authoritative on all civil legislation for future

ages and countries, may be forgiven for being impatient if the question is asked at all. Those who do not believe that Jesus, either then or at any time, intended to save statesmen the trouble and responsibility of legislating for their own countries, will be more anxious to assure themselves of the Christian principles which must underlie any satisfactory decision on this question. Others, again, will simply ask, "Would the change, as far as can be seen, prove advantageous to social well-being?"

The easiest way of treating this question would be to ask, "Which change?" Every country, and, in America, every state has its own divorce laws. In addition to this, the most diverse modifications are suggested.[1] Here we can only consider the general question, should it be possible for married people, in cases of certain physical, mental, or moral incompatibility, to have their marriage annulled? Few people would like to say No; few desire to say Yes. Some indeed affirm that marriage is a contract, and, like other contracts, ought to be capable of being annulled at the wish of both parties concerned. But the whole history of marriage shows that it is not a contract. Nor is marriage, like a contract, a matter for two parties alone. It affects their relatives. Still more, it affects their children. It affects society.

Then is marriage to be indissoluble? The gospel text, Matt. v. 32 (unlike Mark x. 11), seems to suggest one ground of dissolution, namely infidelity. But may there not be other infidelity than the physical act—persistent cruelty in action or intention or word,

[1] For the history and the variety of the divorce laws in England, the Colonies, and the United States, see Hobhouse, L. T., "Morals in Evolution," vol. i. pp. 234-7.

idiocy, and deliberate and deep-rooted vice? The history of marriage and marriage laws can give us no guidance here. Experiments in modern legislation are either too recent or too restricted to be of real use. But there is one distinction which we cannot avoid making. The principles of legislation are one thing; the principles of morals are another. The great principle alike of morals and of the Christian religion in its practical aspect is, Love your neighbour, however undeserving, until he comes to recognise that he is your neighbour; and it has the clearest application to this problem. No amount of evil ought to make the wronged partner wish to be released from the culprit. Protection should be obtainable from actual bodily harm, to the wife (or the husband) and the children; but, if an exalted level of morality may be assumed, the sufferer will be inclined to give up hope as little as he (or she) will wish to indulge in the pleasures of married life, for their own sake, through some other connexion. To hope against hope, to be faithful unto death,

> "To feel in the ink of the slough,
> And the sink of the mire,
> Veins of glory and fire
> Run through and transpierce and transpire"—

this is the very triumph of morality. Judged by this canon, George Meredith's satiric advice—to say nothing of suggestions made more deliberately from less respectable quarters—would be the denial and defiance of all that is best in human conduct and human nature. The censure often cast upon the conduct of Rochester towards Jane Eyre in fiction or of G. H. Lewes and Miss Evans in actual life has been wholly unmerited; but we may well doubt whether

such conduct can meet the challenge of a virtue which has not already abjured heroism.

If, on the other hand, we are to think of the law which is needed because of the hardness of human hearts, there can only be one problem, how to combine the prevention of the greatest possible amount of human suffering with the maintenance of the greatest possible number of marriages. Suffering may be a good thing in itself. Under certain circumstances it is. But legislation never has the right to regard it as such. Whatever the law can do to alleviate suffering, it must do, except at the cost of entailing greater suffering, or of being false to some principle of national or social welfare. On the other hand, the history of human marriage, taken over its whole extent, shows marriage growing less dissoluble, and dissoluble only for increasingly justifiable reasons. The only exception to this rule is that in most European countries divorce laws themselves are only of recent introduction; but, once introduced, they have tended to be enlarged in their scope. The chief reason for this exception, however, has been the wish to avoid the scandal of a dissolution of marriage in reality while marriage persists in name.

Now, there is no better fashion of discrediting marriage than by allowing such a scandal to continue. But if the annulling of marriage is once made easy, it will be apt to suggest itself the more readily to the mind of any one who fancies himself (or herself) aggrieved; every comparatively slight cause of discontent will be exaggerated, and the consequences to the State will be of the most serious description. State and family are far too closely bound up together for anything else to be possible. We cannot return to the old homogeneous loyalty of the pre-family pack

or horde. The loyalty without which the State becomes a mere mob of conflicting interests and jarring units can only be learnt, in this age, around the family hearth. Rob that venerable place of its unique sanctity, allow men and women to think that the life of social and moral nomads is possible for them, and you will have inflicted more damage on the nation than it could suffer from years of the severest commercial depressions or military disasters. As a matter of fact, those circles in our society in which divorce is most frequently obtained are the circles in which true patriotism is least in evidence.

Such, then, if we have any prudence, will be the problem of the future. How the reconciliation between the two aims of individual freedom and social responsibility can be secured, it is no business of ours, in this place, to decide. But whatever form such a decision takes, it is clear that at best, or worst, it will result in a modification of the family system, as we know it, rather than in a transformation. If there is any attempt to " weight the alternative "—to make injustice or cruelty suffer, and to force the injurer to support the injured—the number of separations may grow less than to-day ; divorces will not be likely to be much more numerous. There may even be fewer rash and hasty marriages. In any case, the great majority of marriages, as to-day, will remain undissolved. Even if the proposals for change, so hurriedly and irresponsibly flung out at the present time, did not kill each other, yet, as soon as they were taken seriously, they would break against the rock of sound and sober political wisdom.

It is probable, however, that the real solution of this problem, as of many others in the sphere of society, will turn out to be indirect. After his long

experience of the divorce court, Lord Gorell stated that, if it were not for intemperance, the business of the divorce court would come to an end. When the Commission on Divorce was sitting, the heads of the various Nonconformist communities and of the Society of Friends stated that they had no evidence to offer; divorce was practically unknown in their denominations. It will be admitted that these bodies represent a section of society where the general level of morality is very high, and where family union is also stable and firm. It is a far safer and more satisfactory method to work for stability than to try to cure instability; and our hope for the future must lie in the endeavours of moral and religious teachers rather than in the ingenuity of legislators. The wisest legislators have always understood that the prosperity of a nation is founded on morality, and that the most patriotic efforts are those which are directed to the training and maintenance of character.

Nor need we fear lest such warnings will be heard in vain. Disobedience to them will be followed too quickly by the inevitable penalty. We are all prone to take the line of least resistance. Let any course be made easy, and we shall pursue it. Make a gap in any hedge, and we shall follow each other through. Those who can speak with experience tell us darkly that in crowded tenements where there is abundance of opportunity and little chance of detection or interest in detecting, sexual immorality of the most revolting kind is indulged in with hardly a sense of shame or wrong. If divorce is made easy, it will be practised by a certain number of people, at any rate, for a time. This is the case at present in America. Such a step, however, could produce neither more happiness nor more public spirit; and, unless all

belief in the continuity of the development of the race is unfounded, such legislation would quickly be reversed, and the nation would come to itself once more.

Dealing as we are with an institution which is independent of mere human choice or invention, we can no more reverse its working than we can alter the order of the external world. *Naturam expellas furca, tamen usque recurret.* We cannot get rid of Nature by flinging her out of doors with a pitchfork. Yet Nature cannot do anything by herself. She needs our help. So does the family. We may not be able, happily, to destroy it. Yet it requires constant and unremitting cultivation, if its blessings are to be perpetuated and its domain enlarged. Here, least of all, can we allow the talent to be laid by in a napkin. Our concluding task, therefore, is to consider how our own thought and energy can render the family a still more potent instrument of good in a society which already owes so much to it, yet still labours under such various and heavy burdens.

CHAPTER XII

THE FUTURE OF THE FAMILY

I. The influence of institutions, like that of individuals, can be extended in two ways. Opposing influences from outside may be modified and removed, or else the institution itself can be changed from inside. If the benefits which, as we have agreed, the family has conferred upon society are to be increased, a choice of actions is open to us. We may endeavour to neutralise or destroy those tendencies in modern life, enumerated in the last chapter, which are on the way, if unchecked, to break up the family; or we may look to some modification of the family itself. This may come either by way of legislation, by altering the relation before the law of married persons to one another, redistributing the responsibilities for the maintenance of the family between them, or introducing fresh provisions into the law of divorce; or else it may come from some definite development in public opinion, and in the favour with which it views families of a certain size or social habits which make for or against family life.

One thing, however, must be carefully borne in mind. If the family is really the most deep-rooted of human institutions, it cannot be affected to any purpose, either for better or worse, by a mere movement of the surface of society. It is a plant which cannot be merely dug about and manured. What comes through the roots must be reached at the roots.

Nor can such a plant as this be approached from one side only. Its roots have spread as wide as they have struck deep. To suppose that a single change, or even set of changes, is going to bring about the wished-for effect is folly. No social rearrangement can affect the source and vehicle of parental love and filial trust and reliance. Spiritual needs can only be satisfied by a spiritual power. That power may clothe itself with social and material and even industrial systems and customs ; but unless the power is there, the clothing is no better than the rags of a scare-crow.

The builder of the happiness of the future, therefore, will have to put aside many suggested remedies as useless, if they are regarded by themselves. Among these must even be classed, with whatever regret, the mass of social reforms. His suspicion of these, indeed, will be differently grounded from that which we hear most commonly expressed at present. He will not be afraid lest such reforms should take too much from the rich in order to give to the poor ; he knows that the only justification of wealth, ultimately, is that it should be used for the service of the poor. Nor will he shrink from reform as a quixotic attempt to make people moral by Act of Parliament. He knows that Acts of Parliament can have no other justification, in the world of morals, than to make people good, or at any rate to make the crooked ways to goodness straighter and smoother. Many Acts of Parliament have actually attained this end, and they all tell him of what he can hope for from the future. But he knows that man does not live by bread alone. Some great creative word must be spoken and obeyed.

He has, indeed, no sympathy with the elegant drawing-room criticism which remembers that great

virtues are open to the poor and that religion has gained its proudest triumphs in the slums, and which is therefore eager that the starving seamstress and the crowded couch of incest should continue to exist, so that the servants of Christ may not be unemployed, nor the virtues of Christianity come to an end. On the contrary, he is anxious for every improvement in the housing, the amusements, and the wages and employment of the people; the education of the children and the relief of the distressed will have no more energetic champion than himself. But, to him, all these things are means and not ends. By themselves, they may bring no immunity from social evils. It is true that poverty increases the strength of every temptation. But comfort alone is not enough to parry the attacks of those insidious tendencies to the decay of the family which we have been enumerating.

He will entertain no greater hopes from political action. He is indeed well aware that law is an indispensable ally to social reform, and even, in many cases, to moral progress. He knows that there are some evils which can only be faced when the machinery of the police court is erected in front of them; but he knows also that a law is the result of many conflicting emotions and desires, and has to steer a very tortuous course before it arrives in the harbour of the statute book; and further, that a law, however good, can only touch the outward conduct and possessions of a man, and must of necessity leave untouched those inner springs of action which, above all, he wishes to influence. He thinks with gratitude and joy of the beneficent legislation which has thrown its shield over the child in the factory; which has closed the underground mine to the labour of women

and girls, and enabled harrassed municipalities to clear away the foulest of their courts and alleys; which has gained for workmen the right to unite and bargain on terms of greater equality with capital, and which is girding itself to combat forms of ancient disease and to remove the shadow of the fear of destitution from the path of every working man. But he reflects that in spite of all this, society is faced by very serious evils to-day; that there are some forms of wrong-doing and lust of which no law can ever take account; and that however ingenious and subtle the law, avarice and callousness, self-indulgence and even laziness, can be more ingenious and subtle still.

He will even look with somewhat faint hope upon direct evangelistic activity, so far as it refuses the comradeship of any other ideals of reform. He will be in no danger of forgetting the splendid achievements of the evangelical movement of the eighteenth century, nor the repetition of their glories in the midst of the broken earthenware of his own surroundings. But he sees how the great religious leaders of modern times, from John Wesley to General Booth, have combined with their delineation of the corruption of man's heart and the grace of the Heavenly Father, a fiery declamation and a resolute attack upon the social and industrial evils of the day, with as confident an outspokenness as that which startled the world when the prophets of Israel or of the Middle Ages were on their feet. At the same time, he has noted how often evangelistic ardour has concentrated a man's attention on "getting saved" himself, and has allowed him to tolerate monstrous social wrongs and huge social miseries so long as he could read his own title clear to the bliss of heaven.

His own starting point, therefore, will be somewhat different. His task is to restore or to preserve that attitude of mind which unites a man first with those who are nearest to him, and perfects, in a small circle, those virtues which can then expand over a larger area. And he can truthfully speak about both preserving and restoring that attitude, because he knows that it has existed in humanity from the beginning. He is no pioneer; he does not expect to see a vision that has blessed no human eyes before. His problem is a humbler one. He must preserve the vision for those that come after. And yet there is nobility even in this. Why is the vision in danger of being lost? Because new occasions breed new perils. But they also breed new opportunities. If the changing conditions of our time come near to obscure that vision, they may also crown it with a new glory. Thus the prophet who forthtells the will of the Supreme for the present, becomes once more the seer who foretells the grandeur of the future.

II. But how is he to do this? Simply by the revival of certain familiar yet often forgotten Christian conceptions. One of the greatest errors of to-day is our scepticism as to the importance of conceptions. A conception is as valuable as a law. In fact, it is far more valuable. For when a conception invades the mind of the people, a corresponding law will soon find its way into being. But if there is no conception of a new order, we may formulate half a dozen laws, but none of them will be more than a "vox clamantis in deserto." Immorality has never worked its evil will more complacently than when the statute book has been filled with sumptuary and repressive legislation. The policeman himself is helpless in enforcing a law, however good, unless he has

the opinion of the public behind him. The drunkard, the gambler and the street-walker have never been driven from the pavement save by a wide-spread conviction that their presence there is not only a scandal but an inconvenience and a danger.

From another point of view, psychology teaches the same lesson. An act, unless it is to be either rash or random, must be preceded by a picture, an image. The only acts of which this is not true, are the acts which have become so familiar that we have ceased to be conscious of them, like playing the black and white notes on the piano or keeping our balance on a bicycle. In the proper sense of the word, these acts are not fully acts at all. But there was a time when, in practising even these accomplishments, we needed to keep the mind's eye firmly fixed on what we were hoping to do. And before a nation alters any habit, or learns any new custom, it will have to receive a new thought into its mind.

Take, for example, that great conception of life as a hierarchy of social relationships which was recognisable in the rise and, for a time, the universal influence of feudalism. Think of the still greater conception of freedom ; the conception of freedom from priestly control of man's access to God, arising in the Reformation movement which shook Europe to its foundations in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries ; of freedom from control of self-constituted authorities, which sent a tidal wave of revolution over Europe and America at the end of the eighteenth century ; and of freedom from legislative interference in commerce and industry, which dominated English politics through the first half of the nineteenth century. Let a new conception be once firmly grasped by the mass of men, and law, or revolution, will inevitably follow.

When this country came to think that smuggling was rather a disgraceful game, not " worth its candle," and to realise that it was tolerating the atrocity of slavery, smuggling came automatically to an end, and the slaves were emancipated, even though all the West Indian slave owners had to be compensated.

Supposing we felt about slums as about smuggling, or about the premature and preventable deaths of infants as about the owning of slaves ? It is no good to cry in the ears of the people, " destroy your slums ; exalt your family life." We only harden their hearts and set them thinking about the immediate profits of slum property. We must wake up in them the value and love of certain things which cannot live in the presence of the slum, and which will shed such a beauty over family life that people will be surprised to think they were ever content to miss seeing it.

Now the conceptions we have to revive are these. First, that the real wealth of any community consists in its men and women, healthy, happy and loving one another. This is a principle whose realm extends as far as the widest sayings of the fourth gospel ; and, at the same time, it touches and exalts the humblest endeavours after sanitation and physical comfort. All the great teachers of mankind have claimed that life is of higher worth than its accompaniments ; and, on the lips of Jesus of Nazareth, if we may say so with reverence, the needs of the body were glorified by being brought close to the needs of the soul, and the gifts of the soul were made definite by being consecrated to the task of ministering to the needs of the body. It was central with Jesus that one human soul was of more value than great possessions or great pleasures. The very test of health and happiness is, can a man feel and manifest love to his fellow-men ?

And the test of every institution is, does it help men to love one another ?

Second ; love means service. This also is central in the New Testament. Its very vocabulary leaves no doubt on this point. Until recently, *agape*, the usual New Testament word for " love," was regarded as entirely " ecclesiastical," that is, not found in secular authors. As a matter of fact, it never is found in classical Greek. Recent discoveries, however, have caused us to doubt the existence of any such " ecclesiastical " words ; those which we used to class as such have been all of them found in the everyday records of the dealings of the Greek-speaking Egyptians with one another in New Testament times, and afterwards.[1] *Agape* is one of these " secularised " words. But if the word itself is secularised, the meaning is not. Numerous as are the passages in which it occurs in the New Testament, every one of them contains a reference to service or the laying down of the life. It is primarily used of the redeeming love of Christ ; where it is used of men to one another, it is always the copy, the reincarnation, so to speak, of the passion of the Cross.

Third ; life consists in the conquest of the world. Christianity is not ascetic, in the narrower sense of the word ; no more ascetic than was Wordsworth ; and who ever rejoiced in the beauty of the world more than he unless it were Jesus himself ? The world of sparrows, corn-fields, snow-clad mountains and gentle rain is there to rouse our admiration and increase our trust in a Heavenly Father. But the world of greed and lust, of hate and envy, of misery and sickness and death, is there to rouse our hostility and call forth that passion of opposition which it

[1] See Deissmann, A., " Light from the Ancient East," chap. ii., *sec.* 3.

called forth in Jesus. We too have to take arms against a sea of troubles, and by opposing end them. There is no note of passive acquiescence in the New Testament. Although so many of the early Christians lived in the daily, almost hourly expectation of the coming of Jesus in the clouds, their teachers were never tired of emphasising upon them the necessity of working, "buying up the opportunity," bearing their witness, and rebuking the evil around them. The Christian is to follow his Master in destroying the works of the devil; the sword is drawn against envy and hatred, malice and uncleanness, and the scabbard is thrown away. The New Testament is, in fact, the charter of the poor, and Jesus was never more severe than against those who devoured widows' houses, and for a pretence made long prayers.

Fourth; all this must be embodied in corporate and organised activity. The earliest writings of the Christian Church are quite clear on this point. One of the first things which we learn of the primitive community in Jerusalem was that it had a daily ministration of alms; one of the turning points in Paul's career was the great collection of charitable offerings from the Gentile Christians for the Jewish brethren; and indeed the early history of the growth of the episcopate is to a large extent the history of the methods of supervising the good works of the Church.

The stress laid on almsgiving in the early Church has been responsible for the venerable idea that charity is the chief practical activity of the Christian man. This, indeed, was almost inevitable in the earliest age of the Church; any wider or more organised form of social action was then out of the

question. But the call of charity is to all who have this world's goods, and see their brother in need; and the true method of charity, public or private, is not to fill up the need temporarily, allowing it to arise again, and to be perhaps less willingly filled up a second time; it is to fill up the need so wisely and completely that it shall not arise again, or, better still, to enable the needy person, no longer needy, to protect himself, and to become able to fill up the needs of others in his turn.

The noblest gift is the gift of the power of giving. The greatest need is theirs who have nothing to give. Charity, therefore, in the evangelical sense, must embrace all those activities which heal social diseases and supply social wants. This is the truest charity; it is also the wisest and the most far-seeing; and the traditional largess of the Lady Bountiful, or the careless, hurried gift of the dole to the tramp at the door is not only barely charitable; it may be positively cruel in its perpetuation of helplessness and need. True charity therefore includes every attempt, whether on the part of groups of private people or the State, to substitute the power to gain and to give for the helplessness that can simply ask. It will cover individual visits paid to homes overwhelmed by some sudden trouble, or the systematic work of the members of a Guild of Help, equally with the operations of any wise public scheme of Poor Relief. It will attach to almost any work that a good man can possibly do. The one question it will ask itself will be, Am I creating love, or only satisfying wants?

III. A widespread resolve to approach social problems in this spirit would undoubtedly have very far-reaching results. The weakness of the social movement at present lies in the limitation of its

aims and the dispersion of its activities. Immediate needs are at once so clamant and so diverse. Immediate dangers are so numerous and so pressing. We congratulate ourselves if we seem to have made a few out of the great army of needy individuals a little less liable to be driven by the winds of pauperism and inefficiency over the howling waters of life.

We shall have gradually to change our whole social outlook. At first, little else may have to be changed. The wiser ameliorative processes of to-day will all have to be continued. Children must be tended, prepared for the duties of maturer life, and protected from parental ignorance and avarice. The path of old age must be smoothed and brightened. Obedience to the laws of health must be enforced, alike in workroom and dwelling-house. The wastefulness and the danger, both to health and morals, of lives lived chronically below the primary poverty line must somehow be prevented. But in dealing with all these problems an enlightened social attitude will exercise a rigid spirit of selection. Whatever method sunders individuals who should be living and working together, or perpetuates unwillingness or incapacity for mutual help and obligation, will be looked at with abiding suspicion. Every system which is found, like Trade-Unionism, to rouse the normal but too often dormant desires for comradeship, common activities, the sharing of common responsibilities or the pride in common regards or approbation, will be followed up and extended.

This will naturally mean, first of all, a revival of the spirit of the family in the whole sphere of social and industrial life. And this spirit, happily, like all normal attitudes of mind, is contagious. But nothing can more effectually drive it away than the toleration

of the idea that all a man needs is his own power to work or to enjoy. Next, such an ideal of social service will mean an actual revival of the family as an institution. Suggestions of cheap and easy methods which leave the family where it is will be suspected, while the demand for methods of amelioration which will strengthen the family will itself create a supply. We have here at once a stimulus and a test for the means of social advance. Thirdly, such an ideal will enable us to use the latent stores of social feeling in human nature. The truth that man is a creature formed for social life, will never be adequately appreciated till the conditions of social life become the avowed objects of philanthropic and religious endeavour.

We have too readily acquiesced in the belief that some classes of society are by nature unsocial; our very kindnesses to them have reacted on this belief and by so doing have substantiated it. But all our knowledge both of the physical and mental equipment of mankind has shown us that our duty is not to lament over an inadequate heredity, but to provide an adequate environment. If we bring up the children of the nation, as Plato exhorted us to do, in a fair pasturage, we shall find that the children of the poor respond to our efforts as readily as the children of the well-to-do. We smile, with reason, at the childlike confidence which in one age after another has worked out its Utopias, clearing away the rubbish of generations of ignorance with such inadequate tools—such tiny spades and buckets! Yet it is safe to say that no Utopia has ever exaggerated the level to which society can attain, nor the disappearance of social evils which will follow a resolute attempt to approximate the action of the

State, in its multiform dealings with individuals and groups of individuals within its borders, to the principles of the Sermon on the Mount, the fundamental law of the Heavenly Family and the Heavenly Kingdom.

IV. Lest all this, too, should seem rather dangerously Utopian, an illustration may here be considered from one of the most pressing social questions of the day—we might almost say, from *the* social question. When the two Reports of the Royal Commission on Poor Relief appeared, it was clear that in dealing with one social question we were dealing with all. Pauperism cannot be considered usefully apart from poverty ; poverty cannot be studied apart from the different classes of poor people—children, widows, old persons, the unemployed, and the sick and mentally defective. Nor can it be considered apart from its accompaniments, bad housing, drink, insufficient work and wages, sickness, and innutritious diet. Even opportunities of amusement and public morals claim their share of attention. If was the merit of the commissioners, especially of the minority of their number, to see this. They understood that we cannot grapple with poverty unless we are anxious to cure and determined to prevent ; but they also understood that we cannot drain the morass of destitution unless we dam up all the streams by which the morass is fed.

This necessitated an unprecendently wide discussion of modern social conditions. On the surface, the conclusions of the Minority seemed to be directly antagonistic to the family. The " break up " of the Poor Law seemed equivalent to treating individuals as if family bonds and responsibilities did not exist. Closer examination showed that this was an error.

At present, in many quarters, the family spirit is very weak and in some cases non-existent. Parents are content to let the State do as much or as little as it will for their children. Grown men and women will cheerfully send their aged fathers and mothers to the indiscriminate hospitality of the Poor-house. Unemployed husbands will lounge the whole day away at the public-house doors while their wives replenish the larder and suckle the children. But what lies behind this abdication of family duties? The depravity of the poorer classes? By no means. It would be just as sensible to talk about the depravity of the rich. Is there no idleness in the wealthier classes? No delegation of responsibilities for the training of children to inferiors? No gradual passage from weakened affection to positive disloyalty in the case of both husbands and wives? It is simply that unfavourable conditions of life and occupation have made the discharge of these duties, if not absolutely impossible to a saint or a hero, at all events very difficult to persons of average or low resolution and morality. In the same way, the absence of all necessity to work, or the presence of low social ideals, or both of these together, urge the downward passage into dissipation and the neglect of duty, at both ends of the social scale.

These conditions, if allowed to continue, produce an increasing weakness, both in physique and morale. The first necessity, therefore, is, after all, to change the conditions, or to take out of them altogether as many individuals as possible; the next, to take advantage of this change to call upon the individuals, so treated, to discharge whatever responsibilities they become able to recognise, and, by appealing to them with tact and goodwill, to wake up in them

a readiness to do this, and even a pride in doing it. Such is in fact increasingly the method of the various health and education authorities in dealing with the poor. The mother for whom the all but gratuitous assistance of a " babies' welcome " is provided grows to take a pride in her child, and in keeping him clean and healthy ; such a pride is unknown to the woman whose house has never been invaded by the " meddling " social worker, and who has never heard of the " newfangled " idea of a baby's weighing machine. The parent whose child is educated at the provided school out of the rates acquires a new sense of responsibility for his neatness, punctuality and industry. Even in the case of cripples, consumptives and the mentally weak, after-care Committees are able to induce the relatives to pay a loving attention to the sufferers who, when love had not been quickened by knowledge, friendly encouragement and help, would have been regarded as unwelcome and even impossible burdens.

V. Knowledge, friendly encouragement, and help ; these are the great needs of the inhabitants of our miles and miles of mean streets to-day. A wise and sympathetic observer of the poor[1] has recently spoken very highly of the family feeling, the independence and the readiness to suffer hardship for the sake of another's welfare which exist even in the slums. She would not allow us the word " even," claiming that those fine qualities are as natural there as in Park Lane, and that in many a squalid " Angel Court," love has claimed the mouldering stair. With this statement we may compare the significant argument of Miss Jane Addams, the experienced head of

[1] Miss M. E. Loane, " The Queen's Poor," " The Next Street but One," etc.

the Hull House Settlement, Chicago.[1] She has pointed out that social morality originates in social affections, and that emotion determines social relationships in the poorer quarters of a city. More particularly, the increasing majority of the population of the greater American cities, being drawn from the lower strata of the inhabitants of Eastern Europe, have learnt the value of mutual kindness, even if they know nothing else, and they cherish an ideal of government which includes kindliness as well as protection. Their very poverty and ignorance has preserved in them a readiness to give and to expect assistance which, the authoress thinks, may in time produce the most important results for industrial and international peace.

The statesman, however, will recognise a real danger in this readiness to expect assistance; it has indeed gone far to debauch American civic politics. The demoralising hopes of gratuitous help, fostered by the "annona civica" in the Roman Empire, and the multitudinous benefactions of the "Tammany" system in New York, can only be removed by conferring the power to work and even, eventually, to give. The superior blessedness of giving, compared with receiving, is not a matter known only to faith. When fairly tested by experience, it will always verify itself for normal human beings. Miss Loane is right. And she is right because in her ministering life she has brought into existence the very qualities she has discovered. A harrassed and unsympathetic relieving officer of the old school might have worked in the very streets which Miss Loane has described so vividly, and have been driven to precisely opposite conclusions. By doing so, he would only have shown

[1] See her "Newer Ideals of Peace" (1904).

the strength of the contention that the first need of the poor is friendship, and that the work of friendship will be seen in wiser and more effective help, in a new intolerance of everything in the life and neighbourhood of the less fortunate which we should repel from our own, and in the gradual appearance, when it was least expected, of the characteristics which lie at the base of all stable family life.

We are thus brought back to the family once more. Unless its demands are answered, we cannot take a single step in advance. But this consideration makes it especially necessary to remember the fact, abundantly illustrated in previous chapters, that while the spirit of the family has always been the same, its forms have been infinitely diverse. And the diversity that has been characteristic of the past may manifest itself in the future. Free education, Old Age pensions, school canteens, the endowment of motherhood, have all been thought to be fatal to the permanence of the family, but quite needlessly. For if the family spirit is there, any measure that might prove a danger to the stability of an accidental grouping of individuals will be transformed into a fresh and firm bond. And further, liberation from the daily fear of the lack of the most elementary and pressing necessities does not inevitably mean thriftlessness, or what multitudes of thriftless people would crowd the ranks of well-to-do society! But it does mean the chance of caring for the higher interests of society and family affection. Otherwise, we should surely find the family strongest where poverty is deepest and uncertainty about to-morrow's meals the most complete.

Except in rare instances, sympathy, comradeship and love, even between brothers and sisters, parents

and children, needs some of that ἐκτὸς χορηγία, that sufficiency of worldly goods, which Aristotle found to be necessary to both virtue and happiness. There is probably quite a great deal of love, even in the most comfortable and outwardly stable homes, which would fly out of the window if poverty lifted the latch. If some of our keenest-eyed writers of fiction can be trusted, it is among the comfortable classes that "love in a cottage" is laughed at as a romantic absurdity. And when there is never quite enough for a meal, when there is no escape from fretful children, when the house can never be really clean, when the wife has grown prematurely shapeless or haggard with physical labour and ill-health, and when long-continued monotonous toil has reduced the husband's mind to apathy not always unmixed with brutality, is it strange that the bare suggestion of chivalrous affection should seem a mockery?

VI. There are many who would accept the above conclusions for all the social changes which have actually been brought about, but who would gravely doubt the possibility of similar results from any further extensions, as, for instance, from the endowment of motherhood or the wider changes which woman's suffrage is darkly expected to produce. They point to the indisputable fact [1] that the family was born when the father as well as the mother recognised a responsibility for the care of the child; and that this recognition implies a further readiness to bestow the extra care needed by the mother both before and after the child is borne. No additional security, they urge, either for mother or child, can compensate for the weakening of the claims made on

[1] See p. 179.

the father. Better that some fathers should suffer the disgrace and incur the danger (not always, it must be confessed, a very serious one) of allowing mother and child to suffer through their neglect or impotence, than that public assistance in such cases should give an object lesson by which all fathers, presumably, will be quick to profit. Such assistance, it is argued, would be either harmful or useless. Those who would not be demoralised by its offer would never accept it ; those who would accept it are the very persons to whom it ought never to be offered.

These arguments, however, are certainly open to reply. In the first place, we may take leave to doubt whether the interests of the morality of the fathers ought to be preferred to those of the physical well-being, and even the life, of the children. Whether the fathers are actually shamed or frightened into virtue or not, the State cannot afford to allow the children to suffer or to die. Secondly, people may fall into a moral or social condition in which it is perfectly useless to say to them, " if you do not do this, I shall not do it for you." They will simply leave it undone. They are past the stage when they can be frightened into doing it. The crux of the problem is not to be found in the fathers who support their wives at present, but would leave off doing so if the State offered to relieve them of the duty. Such fathers may exist ; but we have no means of knowing whether they are many or few. We have to deal with the fathers who do not support their wives at present, and who, by refusing to do this, force the State to do so in the end. The assistance, however, that comes after the crisis is always far more expensive than the assistance that comes just before ;

the medical aid that might easily have secured health if given for a few days at the right time may have to struggle with years of debility and disease when it comes too late. Whether those who do not need the offer will be demoralised or not, those who do need it are often beyond the reach of fresh demoralisation ; but if the offer is not made, we run the risk ourselves of the spread of demoralisation to those who might otherwise be kept healthy and sound.

In the third place, the practical endowment of motherhood is a reality over a large part of our society to-day, and its scope has been vastly increased under the new Insurance Act. Among the well-to-do classes, the immediate expenses connected with the birth of a child occasion no anxiety ; but the absence of anxiety is very far from meaning the disappearance of affection or care. It is true that parents will think with anxiety of the subsequent expenses of education and the necessary start in life ; no endowment or competence can obviate this. But neither will the 30s. which the State now ensures to the mother of a new-born child. All that will be done is to secure that no poverty in the household, and no lack of preparation, however inexcusable, on the part of either parent, should rob the new-born child of what it must have. Whatever happens, the child must be assured of a reasonable expectation of a good and useful life, and of the power to give what the State must be able to demand from each of its citizens. The need of such an endowment to-day results from the withholding of its benefits in the past. The neglected child is the father of the improvident and careless man.

But, fourthly, endowment must mean something more than the mere bestowal of doles. What is

even more necessary than support, whether in money or kind, is the care that must be exercised to see that it is rightly used. The State cannot afford to give even a penny, if there is no assurance that it will not be wasted. There must be no giving except on conditions. The neglect of this elementary precaution has been the ruin of our present Poor Law system. Every endowment is properly an investment. If State relief were what it could easily be made, it would be a most valuable form of education. It would include, for all the poorer members of society, what is now being tentatively and sporadically carried out in the privately staffed schools for mothers to which reference has already been made. It would be the logical completion, at one end, of our national system of elementary schools.

But is not such a step as this, however it may minister to the health of individuals, an invasion of the sacred privacy of the home? Does it not turn motherhood into a mere service rendered to the State, and thereby degrade it to the level of the work of the sanitary inspector or the health visitor? In reply to this, it must be urged that nothing can well be degraded by being a service to the State. There can hardly be a really good and capable action which is not, in the truest sense, a service to the State. "But there is a difference between services which are paid for, and services which are not." For any real service, a money equivalent, to be exact, is impossible. But a service is not less real, or even disinterested, because it receives a corresponding monetary return. "The labourer is worthy of his hire."

If then the endowment of motherhood is looked upon, as this objection implies, not as a new species of poor relief, but as a new form of State employment, it must

be remembered that, as we have described it, it differs from ordinary employment in one most significant respect. It is not payment for services rendered; it is payment to enable services to be rendered, and it will involve the power to see that those services are rendered. If family life means the conscientious and loving discharge of mutual personal responsibilities, such action on the part of the State can only increase and deepen it; and the endowment of motherhood will turn out to be the endowment of family life where at present poverty and shiftlessness and ignorance have well-nigh driven it out of existence.

VII. The changes in family life for which woman's suffrage, if it were introduced, might be responsible, need not detain us. Where the suffrage has been tried, as notably in New Zealand, it has occasioned no striking developments in either social or political life. It has tended towards a stronger demand for character in public men, and somewhat more pronounced temperance legislation and administration. It may very probably have an effect on legislation with respect to the grounds for separation and divorce, and the more equal distribution of blame for marital infidelity and sexual impurity in general. All this can only act for the benefit of the family. For the rest, women have always been the great conservative force in social life. Women whose ideals for themselves have pointed elsewhere than to stable family life have been the exception; women who have regarded the family as disadvantageous to society as a whole have been practically non-existent; and women who advocate the extension of the suffrage to-day do so on the ground of its promise of increased purity and comradeship between the sexes

in general and within the family in particular. A feminist revolt against the family is outside the bounds of possibility.

Women's suffrage, however, suggests another question. Even among its supporters there is some doubt as to the desirability of admitting married women to the vote. If the matter is regarded as one of abstract right, it is difficult to see why such a right should either be confined to one sex, or denied only to those members of the other sex who undertake duties of supreme importance to the whole community. The wisest champions of the extension of the suffrage, however, have generally refrained from taking up the ground of abstract right.[1] The question to be decided is whether the community as a whole will gain or lose from such an extension. Apart altogether from the question of allowing the vote to unmarried women, would not the extension of the franchise to wives be likely to introduce an element of political discord into many households, and so prove a fresh foe to the stability of the family? If this were so, the logical way out of the difficulty would be "one household, one vote," rather than "one man, one vote." No one, however, has seriously suggested this expedient. Nor does the danger of political disagreement between fathers and sons, or among brothers living in the same house, appear to be dreaded. Is disagreement, then, between husband and wife regarded as specially probable or specially disastrous?

The former alternative is surely unimportant. The great majority of wives whose thoughts travel at all out of the sphere of household administration—a sphere which their husbands' thoughts seldom enter—

[1] See, for example, J. S. Mill, "The Subjection of Women."

think like their husbands, or lead their husbands to think like them. Such intellectual union, indeed, is at once more common and more natural between husbands and wives than between parents and children, or between brothers and sisters among themselves. But is not disunion possible? This is certainly true, but it will not be either increased or diminished, save in rare cases, by the extension of the vote to wives. An intellectual and independant woman will form, and perhaps express her opinions for herself, whether she enjoys the franchise or not.

It must also be remembered that opportunities for such expression may occur every day; the actual recording of a vote can hardly take place, on the average, more than once every three or four years. Family equilibrium which will be upset by this occasion can hardly be considered stable, even apart from the vote allowed to the wife. On the other hand, the recognition of her partnership in this matter with her husband and her sons must make the woman a better and truer wife and mother than before. "What marriage may be in the case of two persons of cultivated faculties, identical opinions and purposes, between whom there exists that best kind of equality, similarity of powers and capacities, with reciprocal superiority in them—so that each can enjoy the luxury of looking up to the other, and can have alternately the pleasure of leading and being led in the path of development—I will not attempt to describe. But I maintain with the profoundest conviction that this and this only is the ideal of marriage, and that all opinions, customs, and institutions which favour any other notion of it, or turn the consciousness and aspirations connected with it into any other direction, by whatever pre-

tences they may be coloured, are relics of primitive barbarism. The moral regeneration of mankind will only really recommence when the most fundamental of the social relations is placed under the rule of equal justice, and when human beings learn to cultivate their strongest sympathies with an equal in rights and in cultivation."[1]

VIII. As in all great arguments, Mill's noble line of thought passes beyond the limits of his immediate thesis. No words could sum up more worthily the perfect sympathy between husband and wife without which all other family relations must perforce remain imperfect and mutilated. But such an ideal, if it is reached, can never be anything but very rare. Meanwhile, some will still fear that if the State asserts and enforces upon individuals its interests in the discharge of family duties, the connexion of these duties with family life and unity and affection will be forgotten. On the contrary, the relations which the family actually has sustained to the individual and to the State are far too intricate to allow us to fear that any change in them will necessarily be destructive.

The individual may have had to submit to the iron rule of the *patria potestas* in Rome; he may bow before the collective decisions of the old men on the American prairies; or he may only know the mild authority of the modern civilised parent. He may regard himself as a member of the single and separate family in England, the joint and undivided family still lingering on in Russia, or the loose aggregations of individuals in the Australian bush who apply the terms father and mother to a score of people of the same age. He may have absolute

[1] J. S. Mill, *op. cit.*, p. 123 (ed. 1906).

power to bequeath his property to whom he will; his family may decide this important matter for him; or the State and the traditions of his society may lay down strict limitations which they force him to accept. He may be expected to avenge every injury to his family with his own right hand, or he may be severely punished if he retaliates for the death of his next of kin. He may be left absolutely unfettered in his choice of a wife (a very rare amount of liberty), or practically compelled to choose her from a certain religious sect or social circle. The training of his children may be committed entirely to him, or it may be taken out of his hands by State-appointed teachers or the recognised repositories of tribal wisdom.

In any anthropological survey of marriage and educational customs [1] will be found a variety of instances of interference by the community with both family and individual far wider than anything proposed to-day; but such interference suggests the decay of the family in the future as little as it points to promiscuity or the absence of family life in the past. Weakening of family life has never resulted from the community's desire for either extension or restriction of the family sphere of influence. The real solvent of family life, whether in Polynesia or on the Congo, in Moscow or in London, is the desire for wealth or pleasure in the stronger, enforced idleness or the fear of want and starvation in the weaker.

We may therefore be allowed to think out the best way of securing each man and woman in the enjoyment of both rights and duties, undeterred by fears as to the destruction of the family thereby. Indeed,

[1] Ploss, "Das Kind"; G. S. Hall, "Adolescence"; Westermarck, "History of Human Marriage"; Crawley, E., "The Mystic Rose."

the cohesion of the family is nowhere stronger than when uncertainties as to the necessities of life, and even of fairly comfortable life, are entirely subordinate, but where the necessity for ensuring the continuance of simple and satisfying comforts demands regular toil from all. The best mothers will generally be found where the possibility of their husbands' unemployment never need be taken seriously into account; the worst (from the sociologist's point of view), where even a day's employment can never be counted on with certainty, or where too ample wealth makes it financially quite needless.

It follows from this that when we have to consider schemes for making the resources of the community as a whole available for an increasing number of individuals, we cannot test them by any ready-made formula, such as "they will destroy the family," or "this is socialism." The family will not be destroyed so easily; and if such schemes are stigmatised as socialistic, it will have to be admitted that the whole progress of society has been governed by socialism. What we have to ask is, "Will this plan mean more power and more readiness to discharge duty? Will it make unselfishness and effort for and with others more worth while?" To answer such questions we need a new psychology as well as a reformed political economy. To go into details is outside our present plan; but there is not one of the eagerly canvassed proposals of to-day to which this test cannot be applied. Socialism, in its narrower sense, as a theory of the relation of the State to industry and private ownership, has just as little—or as much—to do with the endowment of mothers as with Lord Shaftesbury's Factory Acts, the famous

Taff Vale decision, or the reform of the divorce laws. In its broader sense, the desire that the results of the energies of all may be made available for the happiness of each, it is at bottom identical with the creed of any sound individualism. But all the above mentioned problems have to be submitted to our canon of family efficiency. To make the comfort or ease or even the " rights " of any section of the community, rich or poor, the norm, is to invite disaster.[1] To aim at the larger recognition of responsibility, the deepening wish to gain some common end, is alike true statesmanship and genuine religion.

The same thing must be said of the laws which deal with the permanence or the violation of the marriage bond. Laws cannot make family life; they can only perpetuate the influences which affect it. Only when the mass of the people have come to believe that a certain thing is wrong, will the State be able to say, with any effectiveness, " if you do this, you shall be punished." [2] And then all the weaker individuals, who had wanted to do it, although they knew it was something which people called wrong, find a new obstacle in their way, namely, the policeman and the jail. If there were no weaker individuals among us, or if we had no weaker moments, the framing of laws would be as formal a business as the giving of the royal assent to laws that are actually passed. But since weaker individuals exist, we must do our best to strengthen them. It is really impossible for the law to decide what amount of suffering shall be held to set a wife free from her husband, or what degree of crime or imbecility shall be allowed to annul a

[1] Compare Lev. xix. 15 : " Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment ; thou shalt not respect the person of (*i.e.*, show partiality towards) the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty."

[2] See p. 366.

marriage. It is even more impossible to expect that such a decision, if it could be made, would do anything of itself to check cruelty or enable marriage to stand the shock of crime or the paralysis of feeble-mindedness. Tighten marital bonds or slacken them ; you do nothing to make people look on those bonds with veneration. But it is precisely this which we want to do. If we do not succeed in doing this, we have lost our labour.

How then shall we do it ? By beginning at the right end, like the doctor, instead of at the wrong one, like the quack. For the maintenance of the family and the sanctity of the marriage bond, the problems of the criminal and the lunatic do not matter. They are the exceptions ; and hard cases, as everyone knows, make bad laws. We must consider the normal, not the abnormal. Why do normal people grow restive at family restrictions, and listen, half amused, half serious, to the suggestions of H. G. Wells and Bernard Shaw ? Why do they crowd to the theatres where marriage is treated as if it were an expedient on its trial, and infidelity as if it were a pleasing and rather heroic adventure ? Why do the very rich and the very poor perplex magistrates and juries with their requests to be set " at two " ? We have discovered the answer already. Mutual service and mutual needs have decayed, or else they have never existed. They are no longer practised ; perhaps they have never been taught. If the lesson has not been learnt, it is useless for the magistrate or the legislator to say, " carry it out." It is hardly less useless for him to punish people who neglect it. Indeed, with regard to the honour of marriage, neither of those necessary officials can speak to any purpose, unless they speak indirectly. It is true that

if marriage were not the oldest of human institutions, we might find ourselves in a serious difficulty. Happily, it is here with us ; we have got to preserve it, not to create it. For the generality of mankind, it is preserved when the prayer of Agur the son of Jakeh is fulfilled ; " give me neither poverty nor riches ; feed me with the food that is needful for me." [1]

A society which does not aim at anything so ambitious as the equalisation of the wealth of its members, but at the removal of extremes in its distribution, will be the society in which true family life will most easily flourish, and in which complicated and delicate divorce laws will be least needed. But economic arrangements are not the sole necessaries. Man does not live by bread alone. We have already studied the connexion between the family as an institution and the laws of ethics. Those laws, we have seen, were not made by man. As soon as man existed, he had to yield them obedience. And yet that obedience has always been imperfect and often unwilling. The greatest saints will imagine that they are disobedient enough to be the chief of sinners. The sight of means to do ill deeds constantly makes ill deeds done. And the mere sight of ill deeds begets others equally ill. The laws are there, to be obeyed by us all; and we must remember that obedience to them is also a matter for us all. Every society will need its preachers, its reformers, its prophets ; every society, too, will need a multitude of unnamed, patient and conscientious men and women whose example, never praised, hardly ever consciously noticed, keeps the whole life of the society sweet and pure, shames wrong-doing and looseness,

[1] Prov. xxx. 8.

and gives strength to every desire for purity and faithfulness by channels as small and hidden as those which thread their way beneath the hill-sides to feed the springs of great rivers.

And herein, as the Gospel would remind us, lies the strength of the Kingdom of Heaven. That society whose operation is secret and strong as the leaven, which grows from the smallest of all seeds to a mighty tree, which is so precious that a man would be wise to sell everything that he had to secure the pearl of great price, in which the last is first and the first last, and whose greatest joy is joy over the returning and repentant wanderer, is a description equally true of the followers of a real religion and of the members of a genuine family. All real religion approximates to the religion of Christ; or rather, grows into it. All genuine family life finds itself in the ideals of Christ. The true function of religion is to inspire reverence and eager love for those ideals, and to uphold them as the august will of God and the rapturous joy of man; and since, as we have been already reminded, man has gone astray from God, and broken the true family laws of his life and plunged into alienation and the "far country," religion utters her tenderest and most mysterious word when she tells of the sacrifice which was made by the Father of mankind in order that, by the giving up of His son, the whole race might be reconciled and brought back to its true home.

IX. Two generations before the death of Christ on Calvary, Horace had described the old-fashioned piety on which rested all worthy family life, when both family life and piety seemed decaying before his eyes. The frugal but contented farm life, the regular healthy labour in the fields, the punctual sacrifices on the

rustic altar, the sober and prosperous civic activity, contented in peace, victorious in war—if it would only come back again! Perhaps, he half suggested, the rule of Augustus might restore it. Vain hope! Yet it was on the eve of restoration. Not, indeed, as he expected, in the narrow sphere of a rural life which changing economic circumstances were bound to modify and destroy; but by an impulse, new and yet primeval, which could find its fulfilment in any state of society. If may be that the days of the various forms of family life already considered are all numbered; that the joint family of Northern India will soon be as dead as that of the Russian mirs, and that the tribal arrangements of the Australian bush will disappear as the ancient Roman patriarchal family disappeared long ago.[1] It may be that the family, as it is known to-day in modern Europe and America, will have no more permanence than the forms which have already perished.

It is the business of forms to change. But we need have no fear as to the spirit. This has remained hitherto, through every change of form. Our task is to see that it still has its chance; that the rough places are made smooth and the crooked ways straight; that luxury and greed and suspicion and lust and poverty and degradation are removed out of the way. To do this is indeed to prepare the way of

[1] For an instance of the disappearance of tribal customs before the advent of civilised rule, compare T. C. Hodgson, "The Nagas of Manipur"; before the arrival of the British Government, it was the custom among these primitive people for both the married men and the bachelors to sleep in special club-houses (see p. 64), and for the parents of a family, as soon as a son brought home his bride to the family dwelling, to remove, with all the other members of the household, to another house. British methods of taxation have made these practices too burdensome to be continued. The influence of law and taxation on native family and tribal life can also be seen in Evans, M. S., "Black and White in S. Africa," pp. 68, 82.

the Lord; for the glory of the Lord can never be more majestically revealed than when brethren dwell together in unity, knowing who has set them at one, and at what a price that "at-one-ment" has been secured. It is not our business to prophesy; nor could there be any satisfaction in imagining what will be the result if present tendencies to disintegration are allowed to continue. From some points of view, those tendencies seem dangerous enough. Riches and poverty, labour and leisure, are joining to persuade both the comfortable and the necessitous classes that the interests of their respective members lie outside the sphere of the family, and that the less they are influenced by family claims and traditions, the less difficulty will they have in securing either wages or the particular pleasures they are taught to desire.

It is, however, possible to conceive of a condition of things in which the State guarantees to all normal human beings within its territory a reasonable minimum of the objects of human need and desire, or, to put the matter in another way, that no one is suffered to fall into the grip of any of the recognised causes of destitution. It is also possible to conceive that, in return for such a guarantee, the State shall enforce the right use of these objects, and shall sternly put down any attempt at waste or neglect. That is, the State will require a certain amount of cleanliness, industry, and attention to the elementary but perfectly well-known laws of health. Abnormal individuals, who, for whatever reason, cannot or will not comply with these conditions, will be placed under tutelage, either with the State itself, or with someone responsible to the State. These same conditions will also be enforced with

regard to children—indeed, their enforcement is nowhere of greater importance. But since children, before a certain age, cannot be held responsible themselves, the responsibility must be laid upon their parents, as is the case at present with the responsibility for the child's appearance at school. Similarly, the State must see that a definite minimum of care is bestowed on the sick and aged; and since they too cannot themselves be held responsible for this, the State must look to their relatives, either to support them or to act, where necessary, as the State's almoners.

If such measures can be carried out, the action of the State will prove to be a double support to the family. First, by removing the actual causes of destitution, the State will destroy one of the most powerful causes of the break-up of the family, the indigence which gradually deadens men and women to everything save the brutal pressure of their own wants. Second, by holding the nearest relatives immediately responsible, the State will afford a constant object-lesson of family ties and duties, and will stimulate instincts which it often neglects or professes to treat as non-existent at present.

This will not of itself renew or even maintain what we have called the family spirit, though it will go some way to do both. Nor will it neutralise the attack made upon family life by modern conditions of industry and the growing demand for mobility of labour. A great moral impulse is needed. Such an impulse cannot make up for the absence of favourable conditions, except in a few rare and magnificent cases; nor could it ever create a spirit which was previously non-existent. But the establishment of the conditions just referred to is only an extension of

State action which is already becoming familiar. This being the case, the moral earnestness resident in the community should be able to accomplish the rest, and to preserve a standard of devotion to duty and reverence for the ties of kinship which, wherever conditions are favourable to-day, is as high as it ever was.

If this is secured, it will matter little what outward form the family wears in the future—whether the number of kinsfolk living under the same roof tends to increase, or whether the typical family remains as small as it is at the present time. True, no such arrangements will ever free us from the possibility of self-seeking and disloyalty. All moral and social prosperity has been won by the sword of resolute opposition to selfishness and indolence ; and by that sword it must be maintained. Persistent endeavour and stalwart resistance to temptation will never cease to be necessary. But when the obstacles which society now tolerates are removed, and a new enthusiasm for cleanliness and health, both of body and mind, streams from all that is best in the religion and the culture of the community, the stagnant pools will be mysteriously stirred, and the unsightly patches of sun-baked barren earth will blossom as the rose.

But to produce the garden from the wilderness is to make the stream itself flow more clear and limpid. Morality is necessary for the life of every institution. But there is no institution from whose ordered and effective activity morality herself is not the gainer. The distinction between antecedents and consequents is no more possible in human life than it is in nature. Any advance in the moral consciousness of individuals is an advance in the stability and effectiveness of the family and the State alike,

and in the purifying of all industrial and commercial relations. But the social and economic life of men with one another cannot be elevated without a corresponding elevation of the individual's sense of duty, his reverence for authority, and his consciousness of far-reaching and penetrating responsibilities. There is no impassable gulf between institutions and personal character, or between individual and State. The gulf has been bridged, and that bridge is the family. It is in the family, when we see it at its best, that the individual, surrounded by the jealous affection of kinsmen and comrades, learns to "find" and to respect himself, and to pour the stream of his talents and virtues into the ocean in which his life has had its birth.

We conclude, then, with this conception of the mutual forbearance, common endeavour and spontaneous self-effacing and self-fulfilling affection native in true family life, as the type of all social and religious well-being. Social service, now in its beginnings, has often been feared as a subtle antagonist to more important things. As a matter of fact, all wise social service exists to prepare the soil for those "other-regarding" actions without which the garden of religion becomes a wilderness. Religion, on the other hand, is suspected as an organised institution by many a keen social and political reformer, convinced, not altogether without excuse, that "le cléricalisme, c'est l'ennemi," [1] and dethroned, as a

[1] Compare, however, the declaration of the Socialist "Erfurt Programme," 1900, that Socialism has no concern with the religious opinions of any person. Similarly M. Emile Vandevelde, the leading Belgian Socialist, has declared that Socialists in all lands are agreed that there is to be no interference with personal beliefs. On the Continent, however, and in certain circles in England, there is a widespread conviction that the Church has set herself against the poor, coupled with a strong opposition to certain religious dogmas as they have been taught by Catholicism.

rule of conduct, by numbers of respectable persons who readily accord it lip-service. But religion, from the birth of human society, has surrounded with its halo the restrictions which, while they have preserved the family as an institution, and an integral part of the State, have proved themselves not simply barriers to keep men from the forbidden tree, but bonds to unite them to one another. In its highest form, as Christianity, religion finds the essence of family life, with all its glorification of mutual service, love and sacrifice, in the Kingdom of the Father which is in Heaven, and meets every human ambition and purpose with its majestic " as in heaven, so on earth."

The movements of humanity are measured by centuries, not by years. Society may be in travail, not for months, but for generations. The child of time, when he is first born, may reveal little of his latent capacities to those who stand around his cradle. The great evangelical revival of the eighteenth century was as far from being understood by its heroic authors as was its amazing contemporary, the industrial revolution. Humanly speaking, both streams would have lost themselves in shifting sands, had it not been for the appearance of a group of practical religious and the social societies in the last years of the eighteenth century, and first years of the nineteenth. Since then, all the ideals and aspirations of subsequent years and their distant approximations in practice have the appearance of direction by some master providence who makes his unconscious servants build better than they know.

In politics, we have seen the gradual enfranchisement of the poorer citizen and the more careful protection of the labourer; in philosophy, we have had

to take account of systems so divergent as those of Mill and Lotze, Green and Spencer ; in religion, the passionate claim for reverence and order advanced by the Oxford movement, and the prophetic insistence on the Fatherhood of God by such men as Maurice, Westcott and Dale. The industrial movement has surprised the world with the prosperity of its co-operative societies, and the influence of its trade unions. Settlements, Guilds of Help and voluntary agencies of all kinds have called into activity unsuspected and slumbering energies. The very poetry of the century, to satisfy the questionings of thoughtful minds, has had to teach, with Browning, that this life is just our chance of the prize of learning love—the love which forgets itself and finds its end in the welfare of another.

Perhaps we are now beginning to see more clearly " whither fate calls us, and the will of heaven." The most complex strands of experience may be woven into an entirely simple pattern. All that has made human life worth remembering has had its origin in the simple restraints and services of the family. All that will make it worth admiring will flow from their preservation, consecration, and extension.

" He that is greatest among you, let him be your servant," " that, speaking the truth in love, we may grow up in all things into him, who is the head, even Christ ; from whom all the body, fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each separate part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love."

PRINTED BY
TURNBULL AND SPEARS,
EDINBURGH

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